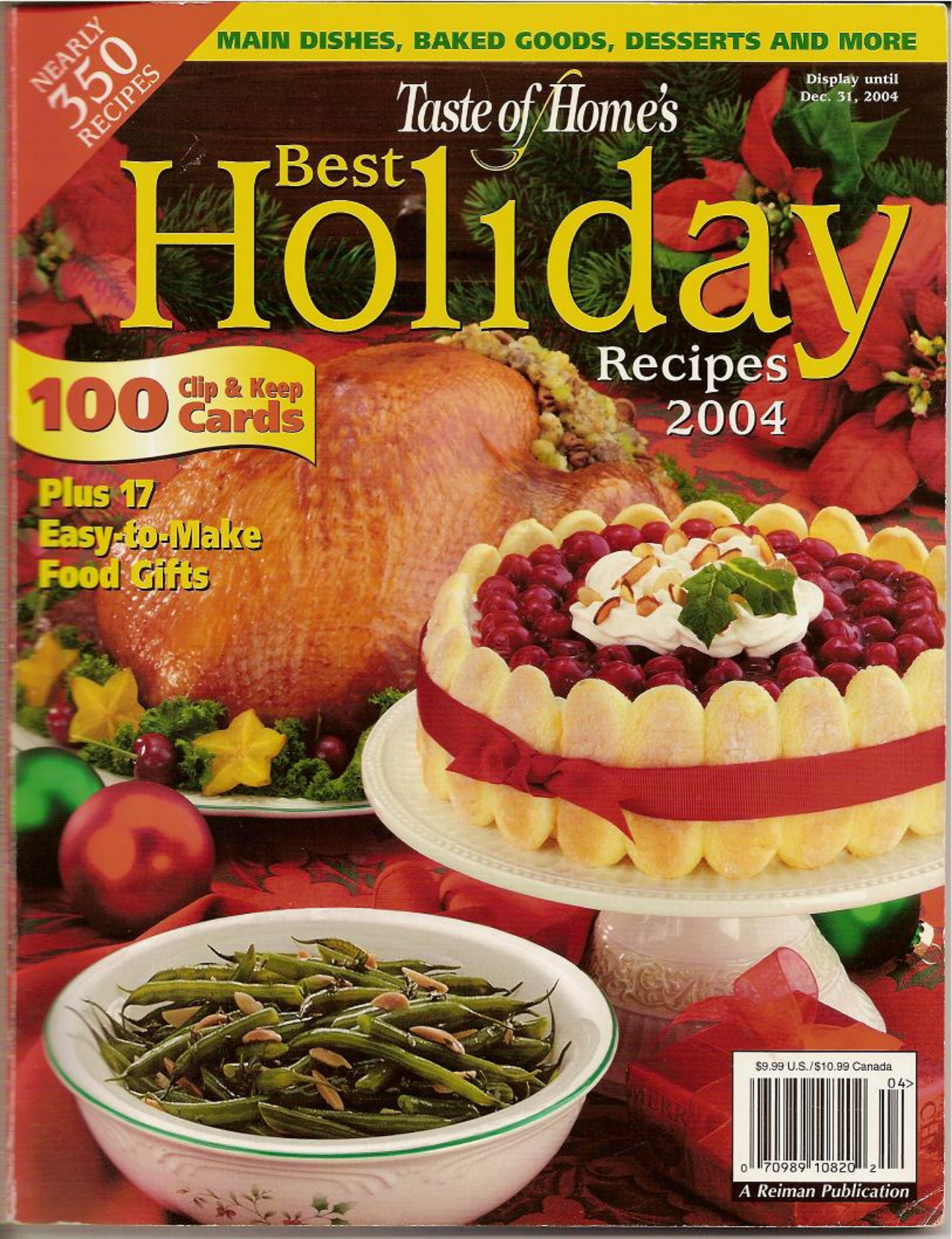
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Sally Lunn Batter Bread

(Pictured below)

The tantalizing aroma of this golden loaf baking always draws people into my mother's kitchen. With its circular shape, it's a pretty bread, too. I've never seen it last more than 2 hours once it's out of the oven!

—Jeanne Voss, Anaheim Hills, California

1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
1/2 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup sugar
2 teaspoons salt
3 eggs
5-1/2 to 6 cups all-purpose flour

HONEY BUTTER:

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup honey

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add the milk, butter, sugar, salt, eggs and 3 cups flour. Beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough (do not knead). Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Stir the dough down. Spoon into a greased and floured 10-in. tube pan. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1 hour. Bake at 400° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan to a wire rack.

Combine the honey butter ingredients until smooth. Serve with bread. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Blue-Ribbon Herb Rolls

(Pictured above)

I developed these rolls by using several ideas and techniques while learning the art of bread making. It won a blue ribbon at our county fair. *—Mary Ann Evans*
Tarpon Springs, Florida

2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast
2-3/4 cups warm water (110° to 115°), *divided*
1 egg, beaten
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup honey *or* molasses
1 tablespoon salt
2 teaspoons dill weed
2 teaspoons dried thyme
2 teaspoons dried basil
1 teaspoon onion powder
4 cups whole wheat flour
4 to 4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/2 cup warm water. Add the next nine ingredients and remaining water; beat until smooth. Gradually add enough all-purpose flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes.

Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down. Shape into 1-in. balls. Place three balls each in greased muffin cups. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 20-25 minutes.

Bake at 375° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan to a wire rack. **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Sweet 'n' Savory Date Loaves

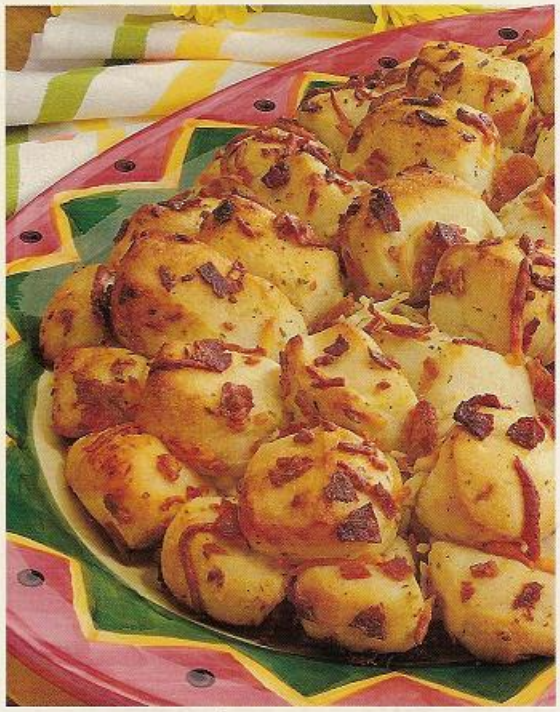
My family and I were thrilled when this won "best of show" for quick breads at the state fair. I sometimes substitute peach nectar for the apricot nectar with terrific results. —Diane Card, Hilliard, Ohio

1-1/2 cups apricot nectar
1-1/2 cups chopped dates
1/2 cup chopped dried apricots
1 tablespoon grated orange peel
1-1/4 teaspoons dried rosemary, crushed
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/3 cup evaporated milk
2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda

In a saucepan, bring the apricot nectar, dates and apricots to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat; add orange peel and rosemary. Cool for 10 minutes.

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg and milk. Combine flour and baking soda; add to creamed mixture alternately with date mixture. Pour into three greased 5-3/4-in. x 3-in. x 2-in. loaf pans.

Bake at 375° for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. **Yield:** 3 mini loaves.



Pull-Apart Bacon Bread

(Pictured above right)

I stumbled across this recipe while looking for something different to take to a brunch. Boy, am I glad I did! Everyone asked for the recipe and could not believe it only called for five ingredients. It's the perfect item to bake for an informal get-together or event.

—Traci Collins, Cheyenne, Wyoming

12 bacon strips, diced
1 loaf (1 pound) frozen bread dough, thawed
2 tablespoons olive oil, *divided*
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded mozzarella cheese
1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix

In a skillet, cook bacon over medium heat for 5 minutes or until partially cooked; drain on paper towels. Roll out dough to 1/2-in. thickness; brush with 1 tablespoon of oil. Cut into 1-in. pieces; place in a large bowl. Add the bacon, cheese, salad dressing mix and remaining oil; toss to coat.

Arrange pieces in a 9-in. x 5-in. oval on a greased baking sheet, layering as needed. Cover and let rise in a warm place for 30 minutes or until doubled.

Bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Cover with foil; bake 5-10 minutes longer or until golden brown. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

Bread Basics

- Many yeast bread recipes give a range of flour amounts. Begin by adding the lower amount, using only enough to keep the dough from becoming too sticky to work with.
- When kneading bread, place a damp dish towel under the floured surface you're working on to keep it from moving around on the countertop.

Pumpkin Gingerbread

(Pictured above)

Pumpkin and ginger are so compatible that to use them in one recipe makes this quick bread doubly delicious. This is my favorite bread during the holiday season because these old-fashioned flavors evoke warm memories of times past. —Mrs. Edwin Hill, Santa Barbara, California

- **1 cup all-purpose flour, *divided***
- **1/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/4 cup canned pumpkin**
- **1/4 cup molasses**
- **1 egg**
- **2-1/2 tablespoons butter, softened**
- **2 tablespoons milk**

TOPPING:

- **1/3 cup chopped walnuts**
- **1 tablespoon sugar**

In a small mixing bowl, combine 1/2 cup flour, brown sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger and baking soda. Add pumpkin, molasses, egg, butter and milk. Beat on low speed for 30 seconds, then on high for 2 minutes. Add the remaining flour; beat on high for 2 minutes.

Pour into two greased 4-1/2-in. x 2-1/2-in. x 1-1/2-in. loaf pans. (There will be a small amount of batter in each pan.) Combine topping ingredients; sprinkle over batter.

Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely. **Yield:** 2 mini loaves.

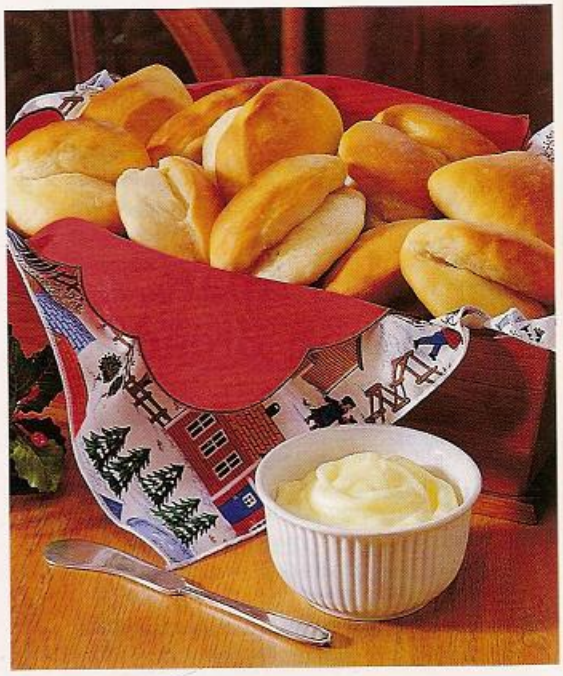
Parker House Rolls

(Pictured below)

My mom is especially well-known for the delectable things she bakes, like these moist, golden rolls. When that basket comes around the table, we all automatically take two because one is just never enough.

—Sandra Melnychenko, Grandview, Manitoba

- **1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- **1 teaspoon plus 6 tablespoons sugar, *divided***
- **1 cup warm water (110° to 115°), *divided***



1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
1 tablespoon salt
5-1/2 to 6 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg
2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
3 tablespoons butter, melted, optional

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast and 1 teaspoon sugar in 1/2 cup water; let stand for 10 minutes. Add milk, salt and remaining sugar and water. Gradually add 2 cups flour; beat until smooth. Beat in egg and oil. Stir in enough remaining flour to make a soft dough.

Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down. Divide in half; roll each half on a floured surface to 1/3- or 1/2-in. thickness.

Cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. round cutter. Brush with butter if desired. Using the dull edge of a table knife, make an off-center crease in each roll. Fold along crease so the large half is on top. Press along folded edge.

Place 2-3 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes. Bake at 375° for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans and cool on wire racks. **Yield:** 2-1/2 dozen.

Sour Cream Twists

(Pictured above right)

The recipe for these tasty twists has been in my family for generations. I like to give them a festive look for the holidays by adding red or green colored sugar.
—Kathy Floyd, Greenville, Florida

1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
4 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup cold butter
1/2 cup shortening
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 cup sour cream
3 teaspoons vanilla extract, *divided*
1-1/2 cups sugar
Red *or* green colored sugar

In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in water. In a mixing bowl, combine flour and salt. Cut in butter and shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumb. Stir in eggs, sour cream, 1 teaspoon vanilla and the yeast mixture. Mix thoroughly (dough will be stiff and resemble pie pastry).

Combine white sugar and remaining vanilla; lightly sprinkle 1/2 cup over a pastry cloth. Roll out half of the dough into a rectangle. Sprinkle with about 1 tablespoon of the sugar mixture plus some red or green colored sugar.

Fold rectangle into thirds (fold one end of dough over center and fold other end over to make three layers). Give dough a quarter turn and repeat rolling, sugaring and folding two more times. Roll out into a 16-in. x 9-in. rectangle. Cut into 3-in. x 1-in. strips. Twist each strip two or three times.

Place on chilled ungreased baking sheets. Repeat with remaining dough, sugar mixture and colored sugar. Bake at 375° for 15-20 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool on wire racks. **Yield:** 8 dozen.

Better Butter

Stir things up by making your own flavored butter! You can add minced herbs, grated cheeses, ground and toasted sesame seeds, spices, mustards, syrups, liquors or juices. Begin with softened butter and blend or beat in your favorite ingredient. When adding a liquid (honey, maple syrup, orange juice, etc.), add it gradually and beat constantly to prevent the mixture from separating.

Top to bottom: Christmas Stollen (page 52), Cranberry Christmas Canes and Butter Rings.

Butter Rings

(Pictured at left)

Mother used to make this coffee cake for special occasions. She clipped the recipe from a newspaper more than 55 years ago; it's still a treasured favorite.

—Florence McBride, Harvard, Illinois

- **1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- **3 tablespoons sugar, *divided***
- **1/4 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 cup cold butter**
- **3 egg yolks**
- **1 cup half-and-half cream, heated to lukewarm**
- **Chopped nuts for garnish**

ICING:

- **1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1 tablespoon milk**
- **1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**

Dissolve yeast and 2 teaspoons sugar in milk; set aside. Combine flour, salt and remaining sugar. Cut in butter until crumbly. Beat the egg yolks into the cream; add to the flour mixture along with the yeast mixture. Blend well and form into a ball. Place dough in a greased bowl; cover and refrigerate overnight.

Punch dough down; place on a lightly floured surface and divide into six balls. Roll each ball into a 24-in. rope. On a greased baking sheet, twist two ropes together, then shape into a 6- to 8-in. ring. Pinch ends together and sprinkle with nuts. Repeat with remaining two rings.

Cover and allow to rise until almost doubled, about 30-45 minutes. Bake at 350° for about 25 minutes or until golden brown. Place on wire racks. Combine icing ingredients; drizzle over warm rings. **Yield:** 3 coffee cakes.

Cranberry Christmas Canes

(Pictured at left)

I received this recipe from my county home economist. See if it becomes a Christmas-morning tradition at your house like it has at ours!

—Jan Malone
Arapaho, Oklahoma

FILLING:

- **1-1/2 cups finely chopped fresh *or* frozen cranberries**
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **1/2 cup raisins**
- **1/3 cup chopped pecans**
- **1/3 cup honey**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons grated orange peel**

DOUGH:

- **1 cup milk**
- **1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- **1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- **1 cup cold butter**
- **2 eggs, beaten**
- **Confectioners' sugar icing, optional**

In a saucepan, combine all filling ingredients. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and cook 5 minutes. Cool to room temperature.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, heat milk over medium heat until bubbles form around sides of pan; cool to lukewarm. Dissolve yeast in water; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, salt and lemon peel. Cut in butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add milk, yeast mixture and eggs. Combine to form a soft dough.

Place dough in a greased bowl. Cover tightly with plastic wrap; refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Divide dough in half. On a well-floured surface, roll out each half of the dough into an 18-in. x 15-in. rectangle.

Divide the filling and spread on each rectangle. Fold each rectangle into thirds, starting with the 15-in. side. Cut each piece into 15 short strips. Twist each strip and shape into a candy cane.

Place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 15-18 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire racks. Frost with confectioners' sugar icing if desired. **Yield:** 30 sweet rolls.

Freezing Holiday Breads

- Before cutting or storing your homemade breads, make sure they have cooled completely, sitting right side up on a rack.
- To freeze bread, double wrap it to make sure it is airtight. You can freeze yeast breads for up to 3 months; quick breads for up to 6 months. Wait to frost, glaze or ice the breads until they are thawed and ready to serve.

Christmas Stollen

(Pictured on page 50)

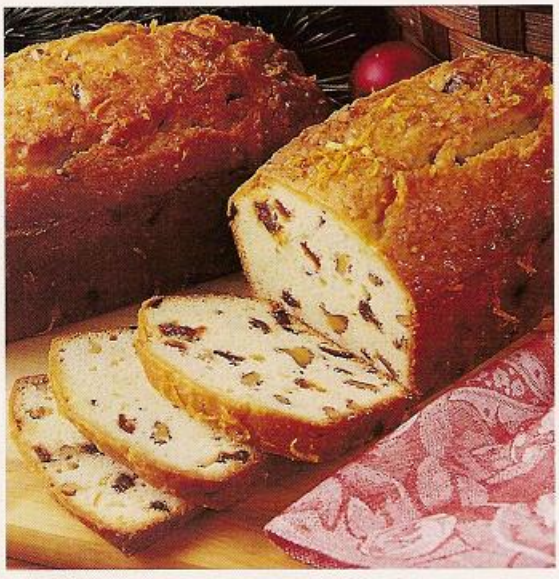
This is my favorite bread during the holidays. I've made it many times to give as Christmas gifts, and I always receive compliments on it. —*Jenny Nichols, Arlington, Texas*

1-1/2 cups warm milk *or* water (110° to 115°)
2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast
6-1/2 to 7-1/2 cups all-purpose flour, *divided*
1-1/2 cups butter
3/4 cup sugar
3 eggs
3/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1/2 pound raisins
1/2 pound chopped blanched almonds
1/2 cup chopped candied fruit
3 tablespoons butter, melted

LEMON GLAZE:
1-1/4 cups confectioners' sugar
1/4 cup lemon juice
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine milk and yeast. Let stand 3-5 minutes. Add 1 cup flour; mix well. Cover and let rest in a warm place until light and foamy, about 1 hour.

In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Add salt and lemon peel. Stir in the yeast mixture and enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.



Punch dough down; knead in raisins, nuts and fruit. Divide into two parts; roll each into a 15-in. x 8-in. oval. Fold each in half lengthwise and place on a greased baking sheet. Brush with melted butter.

Cover and let rise until almost doubled, about 45 minutes. Bake at 350° for 30-40 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire racks.

Combine all glaze ingredients; brush over tops of cooled loaves. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Orange Date Bread

(Pictured below left)

I loved visiting my aunt—she was an excellent baker, and her kitchen always smelled great. With her inspiration, I now bake this moist yummy bread every holiday season. Christmas wouldn't be the same without it. —*Joann Wolfe, Sunland, California*

1 cup butter, softened
2 cups sugar
3 eggs
4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1-1/3 cups buttermilk
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup chopped dates
1 tablespoon grated orange peel

GLAZE:
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup orange juice
2 tablespoons grated orange peel

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs; mix well. Combine flour, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk. Fold in walnuts, dates and orange peel. Pour into two greased and floured 8-1/2-in. x 4-1/2-in. x 2-1/2-in. loaf pans.

Bake at 350° for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Combine glaze ingredients; spoon half over hot bread. Cool for 10 minutes. Remove from pans; spoon remaining glaze over bread. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Bread

(Pictured above)

I've enhanced and revised this recipe many times over the years. Adults and children alike love it!
—Sheri Barber, East Aurora, New York

- **1/2 cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1-1/4 cups canned pumpkin**
- **2 eggs**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cloves**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- **1/4 cup chopped walnuts**

GLAZE:

- **1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1 tablespoon heavy whipping cream**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in pumpkin and eggs. Combine next seven ingredients; stir into creamed mixture and blend well. Stir in chocolate chips and nuts.

Pour into a greased and floured 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 45-50 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Combine glaze ingredients; drizzle over bread. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

Mincemeat Coffee Cake

(Pictured below)

For years my grandmother and I would have a contest to see whose mincemeat coffee cake was the best (our families voted). After years of losses, I modified my original recipe and finally won. I share my winning recipe with you. *—Ed Layton, Absecon, New Jersey*

- **2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast**
- **1-1/4 cups warm milk (110° to 115°), *divided***
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **1/2 cup butter, softened**
- **2 eggs**
- **2 teaspoons salt**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/8 teaspoon *each* ground allspice, cloves and mace**
- **5 to 5-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1-1/2 cups prepared mincemeat**
- **Confectioners' sugar**

In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/2 cup milk. Add sugar, butter, eggs, salt, cinnamon, allspice, cloves, mace, 2-1/2 cups flour and the remaining milk; beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down; let rest 10 minutes.

Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Roll into a 16-in. x 12-in. rectangle. Spread mincemeat to within 1 in. of edges. Roll up from one long side. Pinch seams; join and seal ends to form a circle. Place in a greased 10-in. fluted tube pan. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 30 minutes.

Bake at 375° for 40-45 minutes or until golden. Cool 10 minutes in pan before removing to a wire rack. Just before serving, dust with confectioners' sugar. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Braided Cardamom Rings

(Pictured above)

Most Christmases, I'll take one of my rings to my husband's family and one to my family. Of course, I make sure to keep enough at home, too. They look so festive with the colorful cherries. —*Jo Learman, Caro, Michigan*

- **1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- **1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- **2-1/2 cups warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- **3/4 cup butter, softened**
- **1 egg, beaten**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons ground cardamom**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **8-3/4 to 9-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**

LEMON ICING:

- **2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- **3 to 4 tablespoons milk**
- **1/4 teaspoon lemon extract**
- **Red and green candied cherries, halved, optional**

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in water. Add milk, butter, egg, sugar, cardamom and salt; mix well. Add 6 cups of flour; beat until smooth. Stir in enough of the remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top.

Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1-1/2 to 2 hours.

Punch dough down and divide in half. Divide each half into three portions. Shape each portion into a 24-in.-long rope. Place three ropes on a greased baking sheet; braid. Form into a ring; pinch edges tightly together. Repeat with remaining dough. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 40 minutes. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire racks.

For icing, combine confectioners' sugar, milk and extract; spoon over rings, allowing icing to drizzle down the sides. Decorate with cherries if desired. **Yield:** 2 coffee cakes.

Editor's Note: Rings may be iced and served warm if desired.

Lemon Poppy Seed Bread

The days that I have time for baking are few and far between. That's why this extra-quick bread is perfect. You and your family will love the ease of preparation and the delicious flavor. —*Karen Dougherty, Freeport, Illinois*

- **1 package (18-1/4 ounces) white cake mix without pudding**
- **1 package (3.4 ounces) instant lemon pudding mix**
- **4 eggs**
- **1 cup warm water**
- **1/2 cup vegetable oil**
- **4 teaspoons poppy seeds**

In a mixing bowl, combine the cake and pudding mixes, eggs, water and oil; beat until well mixed. Fold in poppy seeds. Pour into two greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pans for 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Poppy Seed Trivia

There are about 900,000 tiny poppy seeds found in a pound. You can store poppy seeds up to six months when stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Apricot Cheese Crescents

(Pictured below)

Traditionally, I bake these for Christmas. A cross between sweet breads and cookies, they're also something that I have been asked to make for weddings.

—Ruth Gilhousen, Knoxdale, Pennsylvania

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup cold butter
1 cup (8 ounces) small-curd cottage cheese

FILLING:

1 package (6 ounces) dried apricots
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup sugar

TOPPING:

3/4 cup finely chopped almonds
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg white, lightly beaten

In a large bowl, combine flour and salt; cut in butter until crumbly. Add cottage cheese; mix well. Shape into 1-in. balls. Cover and refrigerate several hours or overnight.

For the filling, combine apricots and water in a saucepan. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes. Pour into a blender; cover and process on high speed until smooth. Transfer to a bowl; stir in sugar. Cover and chill.

For topping, combine almonds and sugar; set aside. On a floured surface, roll the balls into 2-1/2-in. circles. Spoon about 1 teaspoon of filling onto each. Fold dough over filling and pinch edges to seal. Place on greased baking sheets. Brush tops with egg white; sprinkle with almond mixture. Bake at 375° for 12-15 minutes or until lightly browned. **Yield:** 4-1/2 dozen.

Best Ever Banana Bread

(Pictured above)

Whenever I pass a display of bananas in the grocery store, I can almost smell the wonderful aroma of this bread. It really is good!

—Gert Kaiser
Kenosha, Wisconsin

1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 cups sugar
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
2 medium ripe bananas, mashed (1 cup)
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon buttermilk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup chopped walnuts

In a large bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda and salt. In another mixing bowl, combine eggs, bananas, oil, buttermilk and vanilla; add to dry ingredients, stirring just until combined. Fold in nuts. Pour into a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. baking pan.

Bake at 325° for 1 hour and 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes; remove from pan to a wire rack. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

Pumpkin Cranberry Nut Bread

- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
- 1-1/2 teaspoons grated orange peel
- 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup chopped fresh *or* frozen cranberries

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add pumpkin and orange peel; mix well (mixture will appear curdled). Combine the flour, cinnamon, salt, baking soda and baking powder; add to pumpkin mixture, beating on low speed just until moistened. Fold in walnuts and cranberries.

Pour into two greased 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 65-75 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Whole Wheat Toasting Bread

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
- 1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons shortening
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3-1/2 to 4 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted

In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, sugar, shortening, egg, salt and 2 cups of flour; beat until smooth. Add enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1-1/2 hours.

Punch dough down. Divide into thirds; roll each into a 12-in. rope. Braid ropes; place in a greased 8-1/2-in. x 4-1/2-in. x 2-1/2-in. loaf pan. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 45 minutes. Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes. Remove from pan and brush with melted butter. Cool on a wire rack. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Wonderful English Muffins

- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast
- 1 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 to 3-1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- Cornmeal

In a saucepan, heat milk over medium heat until bubbles form along sides of pan; add butter, sugar and salt. Stir until butter melts; cool to lukewarm. In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water; add to milk mixture. Stir in all-purpose flour and 1 cup whole wheat flour until smooth. Add sesame seeds, poppy seeds and enough remaining whole wheat flour to make a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 8-10 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down.

Roll to 1/2-in. thickness on a cornmeal-covered surface. Cut into circles with a 3-1/2-in. or 4-in. cutter; cover with a towel and let rise until nearly doubled, about 30 minutes. Place muffins, cornmeal side down, in a greased skillet; cook over medium-low heat for 12-14 minutes or until bottoms are browned. Turn and cook about 12-14 minutes or until browned. Cool on wire racks; split and toast to serve. **Yield:** 12-16 muffins.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Angel Biscuits

- 2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
- 2 cups warm buttermilk (110° to 115°)*
- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup shortening
- Melted butter

Dissolve yeast in water. Let stand 5 minutes. Stir in the buttermilk; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and baking soda. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in buttermilk mixture; mix well.

Turn onto a lightly floured surface; knead 3-4 times. Roll to a 1/2-in. thickness. Cut with a 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter. Place on lightly greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise in a warm place about 1-1/2 hours. Bake at 450° for 8-10 minutes. Lightly brush tops with melted butter. **Yield:** about 2-1/2 dozen.

***Editor's Note:** Warmed buttermilk will appear curdled.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Chicken Kiev

From holiday dinners to potluck suppers, this is one of my most-requested meals. Folks love these nicely seasoned chicken breasts. They're a nice change of pace from plain chicken. —Karin Erickson, Burney, California

Currant-Glazed Cornish Hens

The very first Christmas we were married, I served this to my husband. It's been a family favorite ever since! —Lori Bluml, Carroll, Iowa

Meat Loaf Wellington

My family would rather have this than plain meat loaf. It's a good way to dress up an ordinary dish for company. Many people have asked for the recipe. —Wanda Orton, Emporia, Kansas

Stuffed Crown Roast of Pork

It looks so elegant that everyone thinks I fussed when I serve this roast. But it's actually so easy! My family loves the succulent pork and savory bread stuffing.

—Betty Claycomb, Alverton, Pennsylvania

1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/4 cup cider vinegar

ing in a greased 1-qt. covered baking dish at 350° for 30 minutes. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Turkey Lattice Pie

With its pretty lattice crust, this cheesy baked dish is as eye-catching as it is delicious. It's easy to make, too, since it uses convenient crescent roll dough. It's a fun and different way to dress up leftover turkey.

—Lorraine Naig
Emmetsburg, Iowa

Holiday Berry Chicken

Bottled barbecue sauce and canned cranberries help dress up tasty chicken for the holidays!

—Kay Simpson
Hull, Quebec

Stuffed Flounder

I've grown up eating lots of fish, and this is one of my favorite recipes. I like to prepare this ahead of time when I'm expecting company. When my guests arrive, I just pop it in the oven and it's ready in 30 minutes.

—Cecil Nickerson
Somerville, Massachusetts

German Meatballs

When I was a girl, this was one of our favorite main dishes. Since we raised our own pork and beef, the meat we used was always freshly ground. For variety, these meatballs can be cooked with a sweet cream gravy but we prefer them with sauerkraut.

—Iona Redemer
Calumet, Oklahoma

Stuffed Flounder

- 1/2 cup butter, *divided*
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
- 2-1/2 cups soft bread crumbs
- 2 ounces crumbled blue cheese
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 6 flounder *or* sole fillets (1-1/2 to 2 pounds)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

In a skillet, melt 1/4 cup of butter; add tomato, celery and parsley. Cook over low heat until vegetables are tender and juices evaporate, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in the bread crumbs, blue cheese, egg and salt.

Spread over fillets; roll up and secure with toothpicks. Place in a greased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Melt remaining butter; add lemon juice. Pour over fillets. Cover and bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Remove toothpicks before serving. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

German Meatballs

- 3/4 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 pound ground pork
- 2 to 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 can (27 ounces) sauerkraut, undrained
- 1/3 to 1/2 cup water, optional

Additional snipped parsley

In a mixing bowl, combine first eight ingredients. Crumble beef and pork over mixture and mix gently. Shape into 2-in. balls. Heat the oil in a skillet; brown the meatballs. Remove meatballs and drain.

Spoon sauerkraut into skillet; top with meatballs. Cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until meat is no longer pink, adding water if necessary. Sprinkle with parsley. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Turkey Lattice Pie

- 3 tubes (8 ounces *each*) refrigerated crescent rolls
- 4 cups cubed cooked turkey
- 1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded cheddar *or* Swiss cheese
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped broccoli, thawed and drained
- 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 1-1/3 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon dried minced onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Dash pepper

- 1 egg, lightly beaten

Unroll two tubes of crescent roll dough; separate into rectangles. Place rectangles in an ungreased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Press onto the bottom and 1/4 in. up the sides of pan to form a crust, sealing seams and perforations. Bake at 375° for 5-7 minutes or until light golden brown.

In a bowl, combine the turkey, cheese, broccoli, soup, milk, mustard, onion, salt and pepper; mix well. Spoon over crust. Unroll remaining dough; divide into rectangles. Seal perforations. Cut each rectangle into four 1-in. strips. Using strips, make a lattice design on top of turkey mixture. Brush with egg. Bake 17-22 minutes longer or until top crust is golden brown and filling is hot. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Holiday Berry Chicken

- 1 broiler-fryer chicken (3 to 4 pounds), cut up
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 cup diced onion
- 1/2 cup diced celery
- 1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 1 cup bottled barbecue sauce

In a skillet, brown chicken in butter; season with salt and pepper. Remove the chicken to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan.

In the drippings, saute onion and celery until tender. Add cranberry sauce and barbecue sauce; mix well. Pour over the chicken. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 1-1/2 hours, or until meat juices run clear, basting every 15 minutes. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Harvest

Classic

Creole Green Beans

(Pictured above)

Even though our children are grown, my husband and I remain busy. So we rely on speedy recipes that call for everyday ingredients. This peppery treatment really wakes up green beans. —Sue Kuhn, Dublin, Ohio

- **1 package (16 ounces) frozen cut green beans**
- **5 bacon strips, diced**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
- **2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons brown sugar**
- **1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground mustard**
- **1 can (14-1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained**

Cook beans according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a skillet, cook bacon, onion and green pepper over medium heat until bacon is crisp and vegetables are tender. Remove with a slotted spoon.

Stir the flour, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, salt, pepper and mustard into the drippings until blended. Stir in tomatoes. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Drain beans and add to skillet. Stir in bacon mixture. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Mallow-Pecan Acorn Squash

(Pictured below)

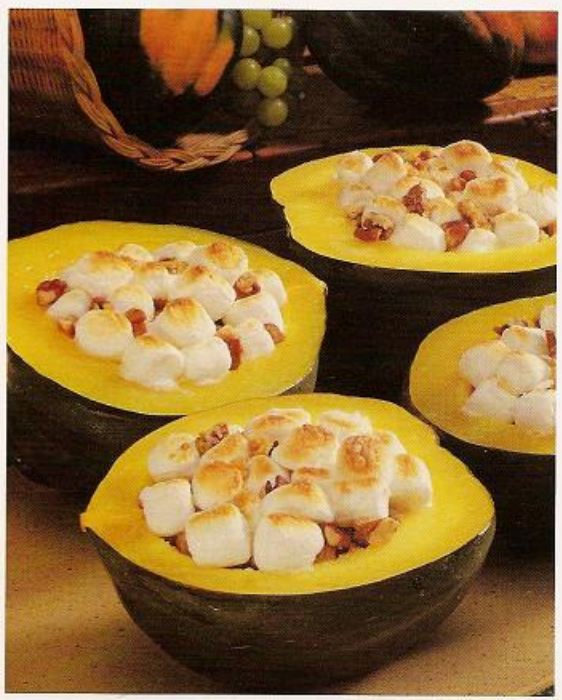
Squash has traditionally been a food our family passes up, but this luscious dish is an exception to the rule. You won't find it among our Thanksgiving leftovers—it's one of the first dishes to return empty.

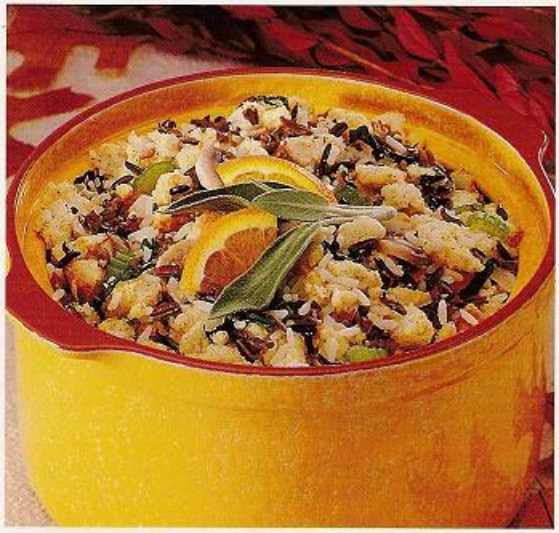
—Kathleen Cox, Wyoming, Michigan

- **2 medium acorn squash, halved and seeded**
- **1/3 cup crushed saltines (about 10 crackers)**
- **1/4 cup chopped pecans**
- **1/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- **3 tablespoons butter, melted, divided**
- **1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **1 cup miniature marshmallows**

Place squash cut side up in an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. In a bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, pecans, brown sugar, 2 tablespoons butter and nutmeg. Spoon into squash. Brush edges of squash with remaining butter.

Cover and bake at 400° for 55-60 minutes or until squash is tender. Sprinkle with marshmallows. Bake, uncovered, for 3-5 minutes or until golden brown. **Yield:** 4 servings.





Flavorful Rice Dressing

(Pictured above)

My original dressing seems to satisfy people who prefer dressing made with bread and those who prefer a rice variety. It includes both, plus spinach and a hint of orange for unexpected surprises. Leftover dressing (if there is any!) reheats well. —*Gloria Warczak, Cedarburg, Wisconsin*

- **7 slices day-old bread, torn**
- **1 cup torn corn bread**
- **2/3 cup hot water**
- **1/2 cup thinly sliced celery**
- **1/2 cup chopped onion**
- **1/2 cup sliced fresh mushrooms**
- **1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- **1 cup firmly packed sliced fresh spinach**
- **1 cup cooked long grain rice**
- **1/2 cup cooked wild rice**
- **1/2 cup orange juice**
- **1 egg, beaten**
- **2 teaspoons rubbed sage**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried thyme**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon sugar**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**

In a large bowl, lightly toss bread and water. In a skillet, saute celery, onion and mushrooms in oil until tender, stirring constantly. Stir into bread mixture. Add remaining ingredients; mix well. Place in a greased 2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. **Yield:** 8 servings.

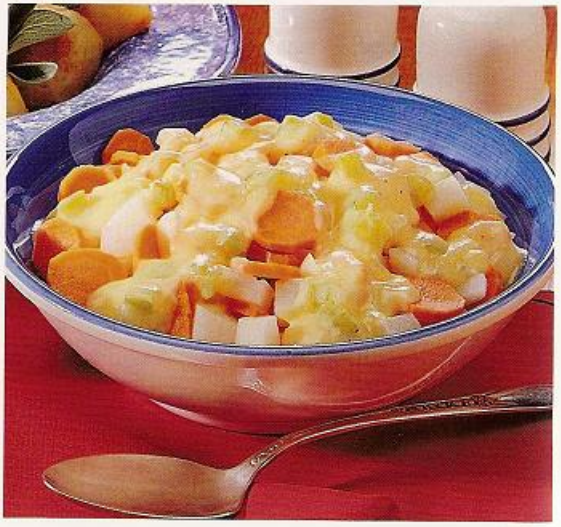
Cheesy Turnips And Carrots

(Pictured below)

Mild-tasting turnips and carrots are wonderfully enhanced by ginger, onion and a mouth-watering creamy cheese sauce in this super side dish. The serving bowl is always empty at the end of the meal.

—Sandra Melnychenko, Grandview, Manitoba

- **3 cups diced peeled turnips**
- **2 cups sliced carrots**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **3/4 cup water**
- **1 teaspoon salt, *divided***
- **1/2 cup chopped onion**
- **1/2 cup diced celery**
- **3 tablespoons butter**
- **3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1-1/2 cups milk**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**



In a saucepan, combine turnips, carrots, ginger, water and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Cover and cook over medium-high heat for 10-15 minutes or until vegetables are tender; drain and reserve liquid. Set vegetables aside.

In a skillet, saute onion and celery in butter until tender; stir in flour, pepper and remaining salt. Add milk and the vegetable liquid; bring to a boil. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Stir in cheese until melted; stir in the vegetables and heat through. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Chili Cheese Grits

(Pictured above)

This zesty dish is a real crowd-pleaser. It's great as a side dish and can also be served as a cold appetizer.

—Martha Lee, Foley, Alabama

- **3 cups water**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **1 cup quick-cooking grits**
- **1/2 cup butter**
- **1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, *divided***
- **3 tablespoons chopped green chilies**
- **2 eggs**
- **1/2 cup milk**

In a medium saucepan, bring water, salt and garlic to a boil; slowly stir in grits. Reduce heat; cook and stir for 3-5 minutes or until thickened. Remove from the heat. Add butter, 1 cup cheese and chilies; stir until butter is melted. Beat eggs and milk; add to the grits and mix well. Pour into a greased 2-qt. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 45 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Dutch Potato Poultry Stuffing

(Pictured below)

All of my ancestors were Pennsylvania Dutch. Add to that the fact my father was a potato farmer, and you see why we never had a holiday dinner without potato "filling" (Pennsylvania Dutch for stuffing)!

—Sarah Krout, Warrington, Pennsylvania

- **5 cups mashed potatoes (without added milk, butter *or* seasoning)**
- **6 cups cubed crustless day-old white bread**
- **2-1/2 cups chopped onion**
- **1 cup minced celery leaves**
- **1 cup minced fresh parsley**
- **3 tablespoons butter, melted**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **3/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **3 eggs**
- **1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup milk**

In a large bowl, combine potatoes, bread cubes, onion, celery leaves, parsley, butter, salt and pepper. In a small bowl, beat eggs and flour until smooth; gradually stir in milk. Pour into the potato mixture and mix well. (Add more milk if stuffing seems dry.)

Transfer to a greased 3-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 325° for 60 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 minutes longer or until lightly browned. **Yield:** about 10 cups (enough for one 12- to 14-pound turkey).

Apricot-Glazed Sweet Potatoes

(Pictured above)

As the wonderful aroma of this dish wafts through the house, I'm always asked, "Is dinner ready yet?" So don't be surprised if your gang comes to the table extra-hungry. —*Joan Huggins, Waynesboro, Mississippi*

- **3 pounds sweet potatoes, cooked, peeled and sliced**
- **1 cup packed brown sugar**
- **5 teaspoons cornstarch**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1 cup apricot nectar**
- **1/2 cup hot water**
- **2 teaspoons grated orange peel**
- **2 teaspoons butter**
- **1/2 cup chopped pecans**

Place sweet potatoes in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish and set aside. In a saucepan, combine brown sugar, cornstarch, salt and cinnamon; stir in apricot nectar, water and orange peel. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in butter and pecans. Pour over sweet potatoes. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until heated through. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

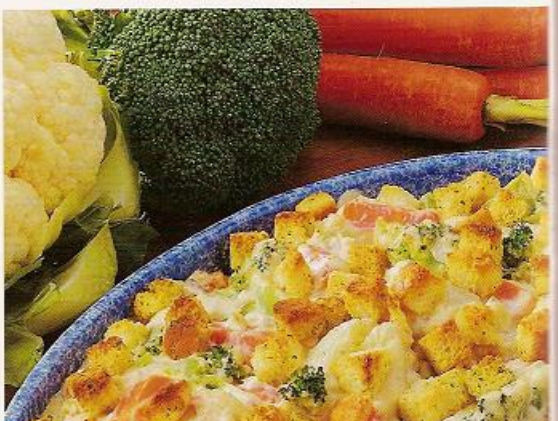
Creamy Vegetable Casserole

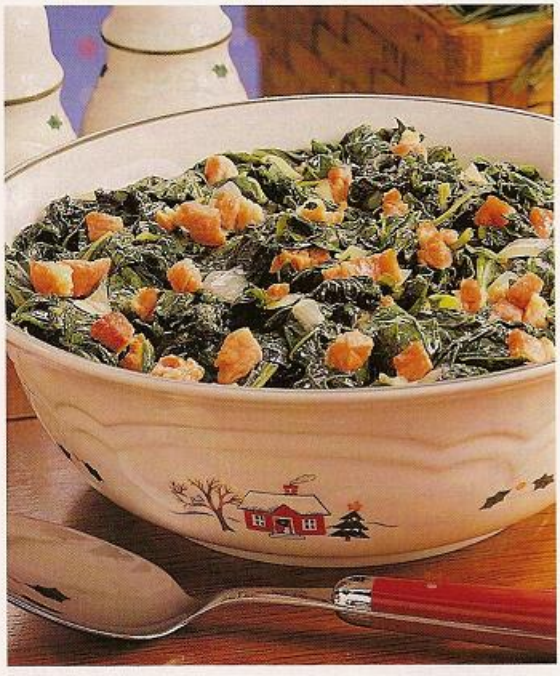
(Pictured below)

I have a fussy eater in my house who absolutely loves this vegetable medley. It can be assembled in a snap, leaving time to fix the main course, set the table or just sit back and relax. —*Tami Kratzer, West Jordan, Utah*

- **1 package (16 ounces) frozen broccoli, carrots and cauliflower**
- **1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- **1 carton (8 ounces) spreadable garden vegetable cream cheese**
- **1/2 to 1 cup seasoned croutons**

Prepare the vegetables according to package directions; drain and place in a large bowl. Stir in the soup and cream cheese. Transfer to a greased 1-qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with croutons. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 25 minutes or until bubbly. **Yield:** 6 servings.





Country Turnip Greens

(Pictured above)

This easy recipe results in a delicious dish of cooked greens sure to please any palate. The key is the rich flavor of pork and onion simmered with the fresh greens. —*Sandra Pichon, Slidell, Louisiana*

- **3/4 pound lean salt pork *or* bacon, diced**
- **4-1/2 pounds fresh turnip greens,* trimmed**
- **1-1/2 cups water**
- **1 large onion, chopped**
- **1 teaspoon sugar**
- **1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon pepper**

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, fry salt pork just until cooked. Drain, reserving 2 tablespoons of drippings. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 45 minutes or until greens are tender. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

***Editor's Note:** Fresh spinach can be substituted for the turnip greens. Reduce the cooking time to 10 minutes or until spinach is tender.

Keeping Mint Fresh

Choose mint with evenly colored leaves that don't show any signs of wilting. You can store a bunch of mint in the refrigerator, stems down in a glass of water with a plastic bag over the leaves, for up to 1 week. Change the water every 2 days.

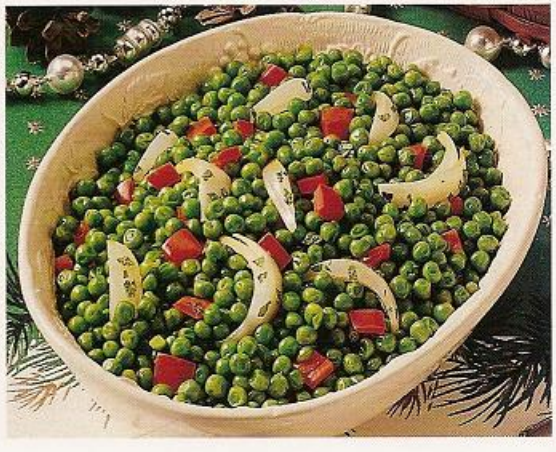
Minty Peas And Onions

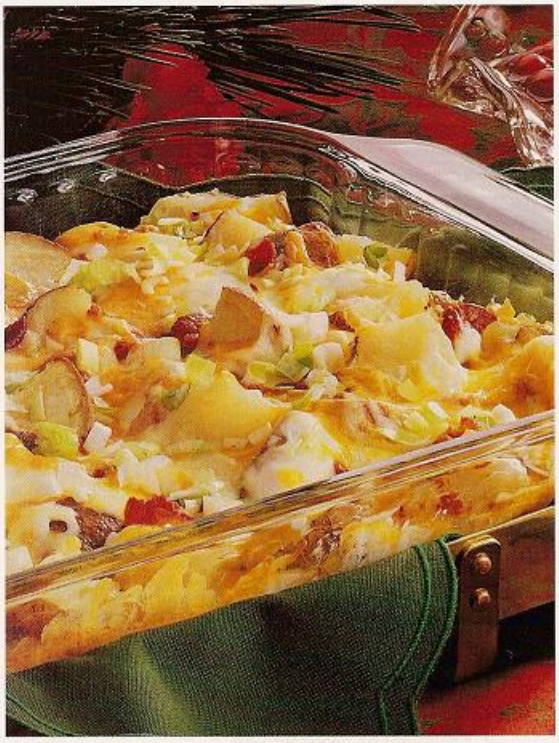
(Pictured below)

Mother always relied on peas and onions when she was in a hurry and needed a quick side dish. Besides being easy to prepare, this dish was loved by everyone in our family. It was handed down to my mother by my grandmother. —*Santa D'Addario, Brooklyn, New York*

- **2 large onions, cut into 1/2-inch wedges**
- **1/2 cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- **2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **2 packages (16 ounces *each*) frozen peas**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh mint *or* 2 teaspoons dried mint**

In a large skillet, saute onions and red pepper in oil until onions just begin to soften. Add peas. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes or until heated through. Stir in mint and cook for 1 minute. **Yield:** 8 servings.





Twice-Baked Potato Casserole

(Pictured above)

My daughter gave me this recipe because she knows I love potatoes. The hearty casserole is loaded with a palate-pleasing combination of bacon, cheeses, green onions and sour cream. —*Betty Miars, Anna, Ohio*

- **6 medium unpeeled potatoes, baked**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1 pound sliced bacon, cooked and crumbled**
- **3 cups (24 ounces) sour cream**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded mozzarella cheese**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **2 green onions, chopped**

Cut baked potatoes into 1-in. cubes. Place half in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with half of the salt, pepper and bacon. Top with half of the sour cream and cheeses. Repeat layers. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20 minutes or until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with onions. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Winter Root Vegetables

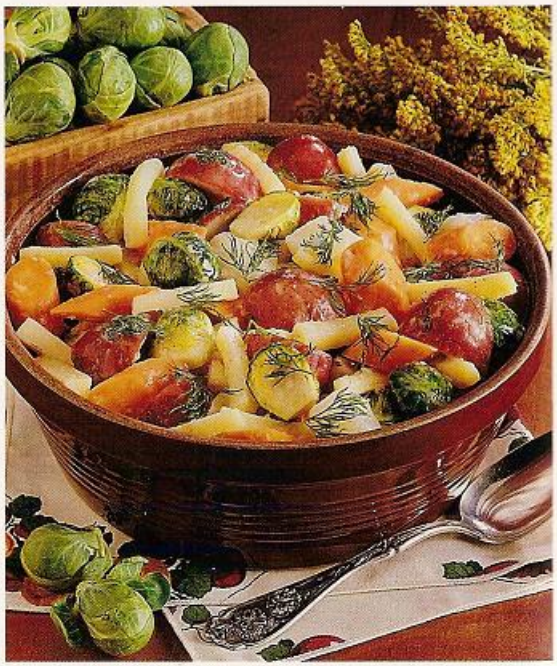
(Pictured below)

Christmas dinner wouldn't be the same without this colorful side dish. We love the interesting combination of vegetables including red potatoes, brussels sprouts and parsnips covered with a zippy sauce.

—Mary Jane Jones, Williamstown, West Virginia

- **2 pounds small red potatoes, quartered**
- **1 pound brussels sprouts, halved**
- **1/2 pound parsnips, peeled and julienned**
- **1/2 pound carrots, cut into chunks**
- **1/2 pound turnips, peeled and cut into chunks**
- **1/2 cup butter**
- **2 tablespoons prepared horseradish**
- **2 tablespoons cider vinegar**
- **2 tablespoons snipped fresh dill *or* 2 teaspoons dill weed**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt, optional**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**

Cook vegetables separately in water until tender; drain. Melt butter; stir in remaining ingredients. Combine the vegetables and butter mixture; toss to coat. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.



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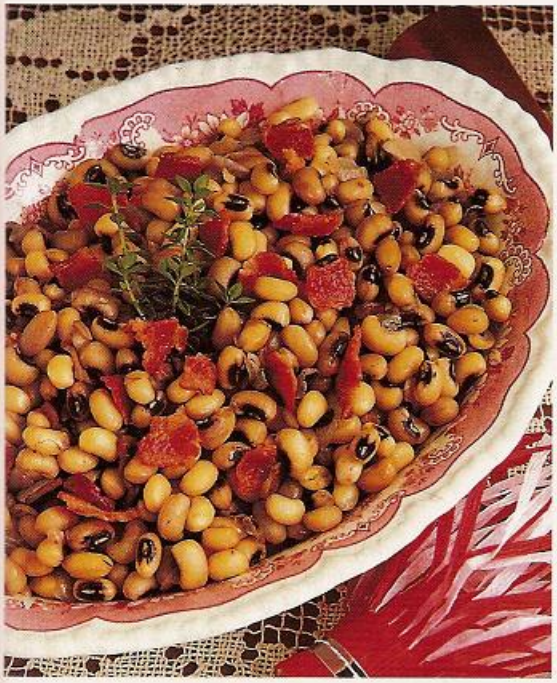


Black-Eyed Peas With Bacon

(Pictured above)

A real Southern favorite, black-eyed peas are traditionally served on New Year's Day to bring good luck. My mother's recipe with bacon, garlic and thyme makes them extra special. —*Ruby Williams*
Bogalusa, Louisiana

1 pound black-eyed peas, rinsed and sorted
1/2 pound bacon, cooked and crumbled
1 large onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, minced
1 tablespoon butter
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
Salt to taste
Additional crumbled bacon, optional

Place peas, bacon and enough water to cover in a large kettle; bring to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat; cover and let stand for 1 hour. Do not drain. In a skillet, saute onion and garlic in butter until tender. Add to the pea mixture with thyme and salt. Return to the heat; cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until peas are soft. Top with crumbled bacon if desired. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Cauliflower Au Gratin

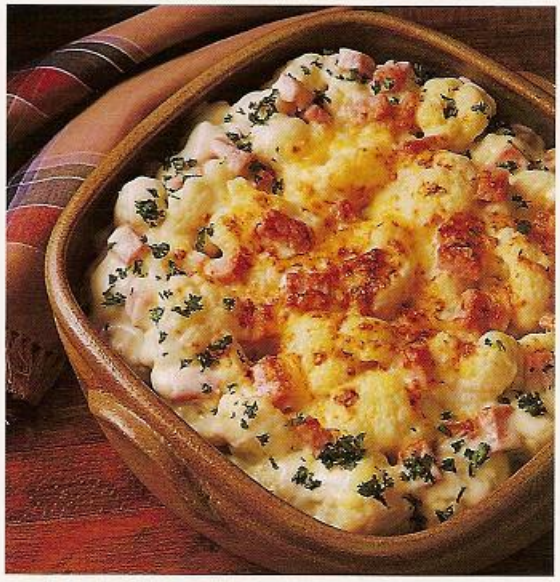
(Pictured below)

This dish will make a vegetable lover out of anyone. Whenever I serve it, everyone just raves about it and asks for the recipe. Sometimes I'll substitute broccoli for all or half of the cauliflower, and it tastes just as good!
—Jacki Ricci, Ely, Nevada

6 tablespoons butter
4 ounces fully cooked ham, chopped
1 to 2 garlic cloves, minced
1 head cauliflower (3 pounds), broken into florets
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
1/4 teaspoon salt
Pepper to taste
Pinch cayenne pepper
1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese
2 to 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley

Melt butter in a large skillet. Saute ham and garlic for 2 minutes. Add cauliflower and cook just until crisp-tender, about 10 minutes. Combine flour and cream until smooth; stir into skillet and blend well. Add salt, pepper and cayenne. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook and stir for 2 minutes.

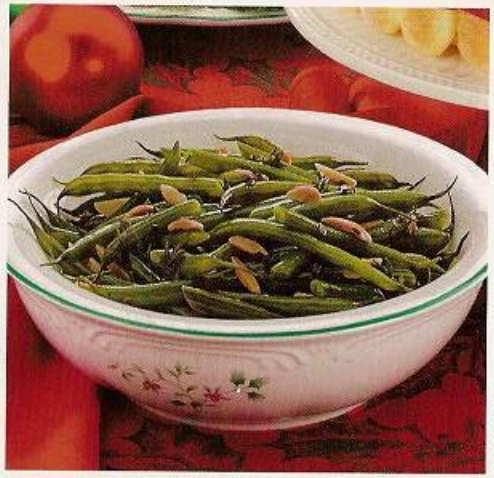
Transfer to an ungreased 2-qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese. Place under a preheated broiler until lightly browned, about 2-4 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.



Green Beans with Almonds

Thyme is a nice addition to this classic vegetable side dish. It's a snap to make for family, yet it's special enough to serve guests.

—Kenna Baber
Rochester, Minnesota



Spinach Cheese Bake

Even those who aren't fond of spinach will find this dish very tasty, because the spinach flavor is mellowed by the cheese and eggs. Those who enjoy spinach (like me) love this dish.

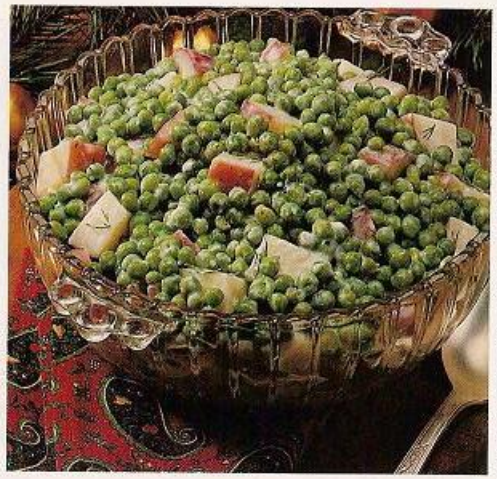
—Elaine Hoehn
Merriam, Kansas

Unstuffing

With sausage, mushooms, celery and the perfect blend of seasonings, this moist dressing is irresistible. I like to prepare this dish with turkey, and I call it "Unstuffing" since it bakes separately from the turkey, which I do on the grill. —Ken Churches
San Andreas, California

Creamed Peas and Potatoes

Nothing beats this comforting side dish. The peas and potatoes combined with a creamy white sauce make a hearty dish that also adds appealing color to your meal. —Linda Nilsen
Anoka, Minnesota



Unstuffing

- 1/2 pound bulk Italian sausage
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 3/4 cup chopped celery
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 6 cups unseasoned stuffing croutons *or* dry bread cubes
- 2-1/2 to 3 cups chicken broth

In a large skillet over medium heat, cook sausage until no longer pink; drain. Add butter, mushrooms, celery and onion; saute 2-3 minutes or until onion is tender. Stir in poultry seasoning, salt and pepper.

Transfer to a large bowl; add croutons and enough broth to moisten. Place in a greased 2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 minutes more. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Creamed Peas and Potatoes

- 4 medium red potatoes, cubed
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh dill

Place potatoes in a saucepan; cover with water and cook until tender. Cook peas according to package directions, adding the sugar.

Meanwhile, melt butter in a saucepan; add flour, salt and pepper to form a paste. Gradually stir in milk. Bring to a boil; boil for 1 minute. Add dill; cook until thickened and bubbly.

Drain potatoes and peas; place in a serving bowl. Pour sauce over and stir to coat. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Green Beans with Almonds

- 2 pounds fresh green beans
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh thyme *or* 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/3 cup slivered almonds, toasted

Place beans in a steamer basket. Place in a saucepan over 1 in. of water; bring to a boil. Cover and steam for 10-12 minutes or until crisp-tender. In a large skillet, melt butter; add the beans, thyme, salt and pepper. Cook and stir for 5 minutes or until heated through. Sprinkle with almonds. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Spinach Cheese Bake

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded process American cheese
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 1-1/2 cups soft bread crumbs
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

In a medium saucepan over low heat, melt butter; blend in flour until smooth. Cook and stir for 1-2 minutes. Gradually stir in milk; bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes.

Remove from the heat; stir in cheese until melted. Add spinach, bread crumbs, eggs and seasonings; mix well. Spoon into an ungreased 1-1/2-qt. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 45-50 minutes or until lightly browned. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

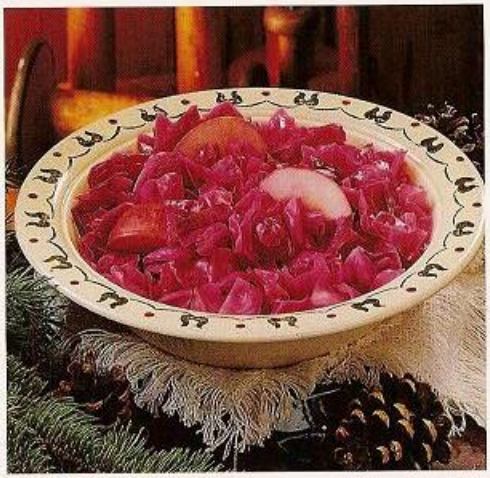
Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Mushroom Wild Rice

This colorful casserole is a standout from my mother's collection of Thanksgiving recipes. Excellent texture and taste guarantee it won't play second fiddle to either the turkey or the pumpkin pie!

—Charlene Baert
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Spiced Red Cabbage



When it comes to vegetable dishes, this traditional one is at the top of my list. The wonderful sweet-sour aroma and taste remind me of home. Plus, it looks so pretty on the table.

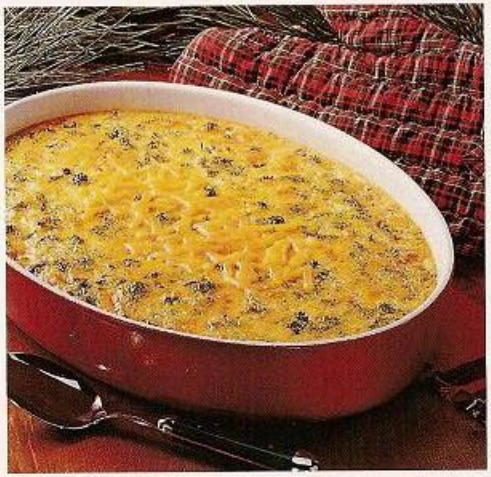
—Karin Cousineau
Burlington, North Carolina

Crab-Stuffed Potatoes

Crabmeat is a favorite in this part of the country. It gives twice-baked potatoes great flavor, and the onions add zip—potato lovers all rave about them.

—Ruby Williams
Bogalusa, Louisiana

Broccoli Cheddar Casserole



We're lucky to have fresh fruits and vegetables year-round. I put bountiful Arizona broccoli to great use in this rich side dish. Even those who don't care for broccoli finish off big helpings. *—Carol Strickland*
Yuma, Arizona

Crab-Stuffed Potatoes

- 4 medium baking potatoes
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 to 1/3 cup half-and-half cream
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green onions *or* chives
- 1 can (6-1/2 ounces) crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed *or* 1 package (8 ounces) imitation crabmeat, chopped
- Paprika

Bake potatoes at 425° for 45-55 minutes or until tender. When cool enough to handle, halve potatoes lengthwise. Carefully scoop out pulp into a bowl, leaving a thin shell. Set shells aside.

Beat or mash potatoes with butter, cream, salt and pepper until smooth. Using a fork, stir in cheese and onions. Gently mix in crab. Stuff shells. Sprinkle with paprika. Return to the oven for 15 minutes or until heated through. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Broccoli Cheddar Casserole

- 8 cups chopped fresh broccoli
- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 3/4 cup butter
- 12 eggs
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, *divided*
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper

In a skillet over medium heat, saute broccoli and onion in butter until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes; set aside.

In a bowl, beat eggs. Add cream and 1-3/4 cups of cheese; mix well. Stir in the broccoli mixture, salt and pepper. Pour into a greased 3-qt. baking dish; set in a larger pan filled with 1 in. of hot water.

Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 45-50 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Mushroom Wild Rice

- 4 cups water
- 1 cup uncooked wild rice
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt, *divided*
- 1/2 cup uncooked brown rice
- 8 bacon strips, diced
- 2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 medium sweet red pepper, chopped
- 1 celery rib, thinly sliced
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) beef broth
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/4 cup cold water
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds

In a large saucepan, bring water, wild rice, butter and 1/2 teaspoon salt to a boil. Reduce heat; cover; simmer for 40 minutes. Stir in brown rice. Cover and simmer 25-30 minutes longer or until rice is tender. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook bacon until crisp. Remove bacon to paper towels; drain, reserving 2 tablespoons drippings.

In the drippings, saute mushrooms, onion, peppers and celery until tender. Stir in broth and remaining salt. Bring to a boil. Combine the cornstarch and cold water until smooth; stir into mushroom mixture. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly; stir in almonds and bacon. Drain rice; add mushroom mixture. Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Cover; bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Uncover; bake 5-10 minutes longer or until heated through. **Yield:** 12 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Spiced Red Cabbage

- 1/2 medium head red cabbage, diced
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 medium tart apple, quartered
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon salt, optional
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves

Place cabbage in a large kettle of boiling salted water; boil for 1 minute. Drain. Return to kettle; stir in remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer for 1 hour or until cabbage is tender. Remove bay leaf. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Easy

Mom's Sweet

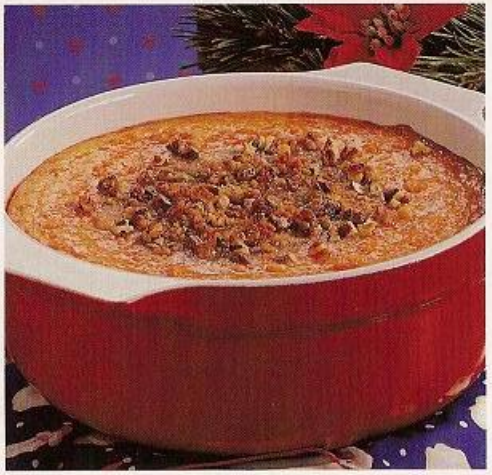
Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Easy Berry Relish

This tart flavorful relish will catch your eye and entice your taste buds. It adds beautiful color to a meal. Plus, it only has five ingredients. Your guests will be impressed.

—Dorothy Anderson
Ottawa, Kansas

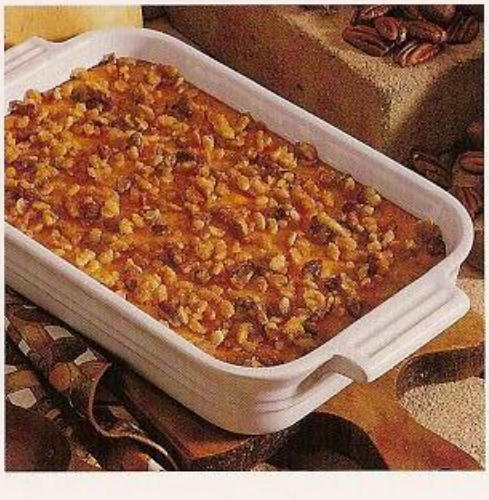
Mom's Sweet Potato Bake



Mom loves sweet potatoes and fixed them often in this creamy, comforting casserole. With its nutty topping, this side dish could almost serve as a dessert. It's yummy!

—Sandra Pichon
Slidell, Louisiana

Butternut Squash Bake



If I ask our two girls what to fix for a special meal, this dish is always requested. I discovered this slightly sweet casserole at a church dinner many years ago, and now I take it to potluck dinners and come home with an empty dish! *—Julie Jahn*
Decatur, Indiana

Turkey-Berry Stuffing Balls

You'll spend less time in the kitchen when you prepare this quick side dish that takes advantage of seasoned stuffing croutons. This is terrific to take to potlucks and holiday dinners. The recipe can easily be doubled for large gatherings.

—Bernadine Dirmeyer
Harpster, Ohio

Butternut Squash Bake

- 1/3 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 can (5 ounces) evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups mashed cooked butternut squash

TOPPING:

- 1/2 cup crisp rice cereal
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs, milk and vanilla. Stir in squash (mixture will be thin). Pour into a greased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking pan.

Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 45 minutes or until almost set. Combine topping ingredients; sprinkle over casserole. Return to the oven for 5-10 minutes or until bubbly. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Turkey-Berry Stuffing Balls

- 1 pound ground turkey
- 1 celery rib, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1-1/4 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups seasoned stuffing croutons
- 3/4 cup fresh *or* frozen cranberries, halved

In a large skillet, cook turkey, celery and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. In a large bowl, combine eggs, broth and stuffing; let stand for 5 minutes. Stir in turkey mixture and cranberries.

Shape into 12 balls and place in a greased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 35-40 minutes or until heated through. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Easy Berry Relish

- 1 package (12 ounces) fresh or frozen cranberries
- 2-1/2 cups sugar
- 1-2/3 cups ginger ale
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1 package (3 ounces) raspberry gelatin

In a saucepan, combine the first four ingredients. Cook over medium heat until the berries pop, about 15 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in gelatin until dissolved. Pour into serving bowl. Refrigerate overnight. **Yield:** 5 cups.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Mom's Sweet Potato Bake

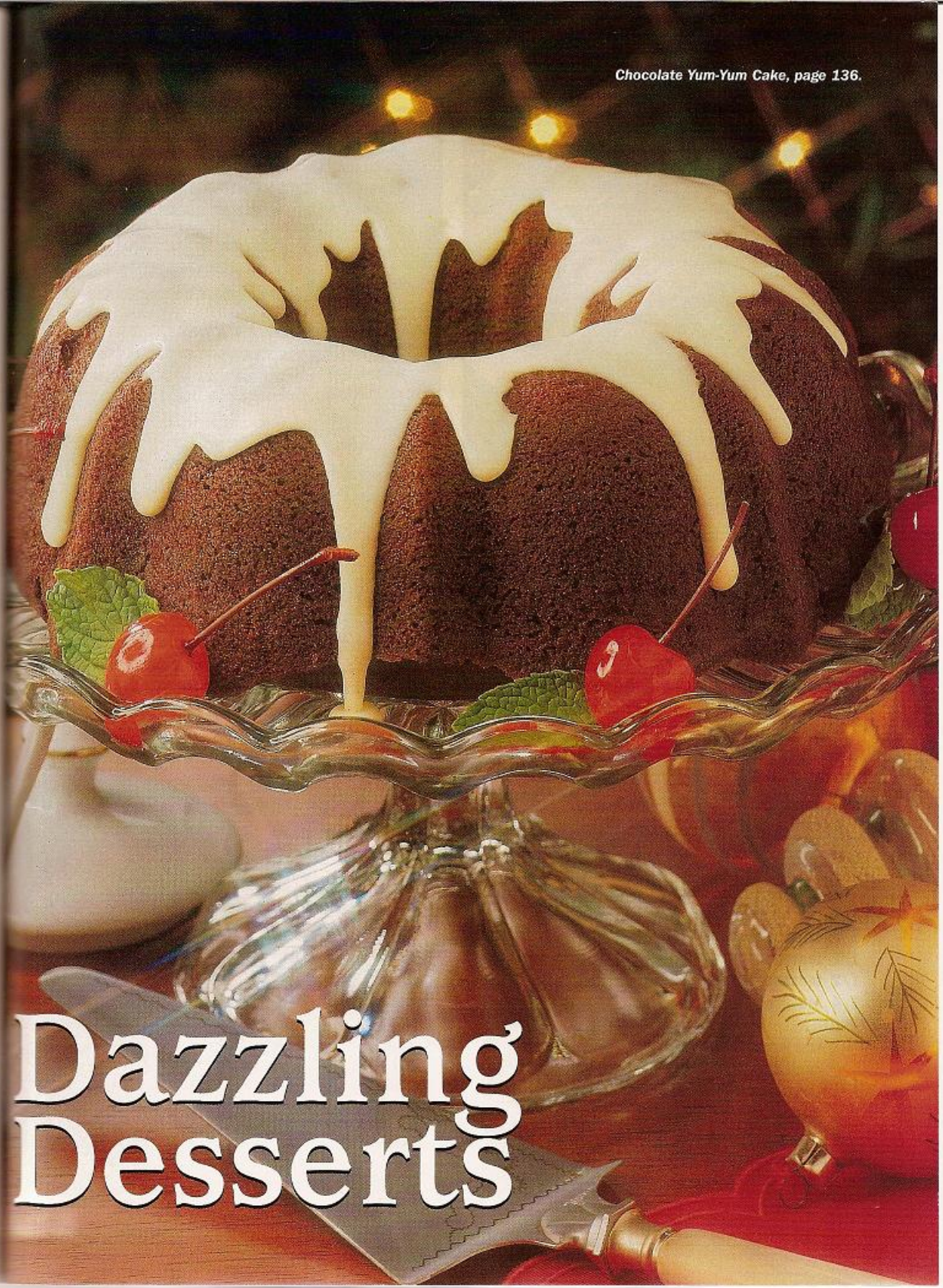
- 3 cups cold mashed sweet potatoes (prepared without milk *or* butter)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

TOPPING:

- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons cold butter

In a mixing bowl, beat sweet potatoes, sugar, milk, butter, eggs, salt and vanilla until smooth. Transfer to a greased 2-qt. baking dish. In a small bowl, combine brown sugar, pecans and flour; cut in butter until crumbly. Sprinkle over potato mixture. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 45-50 minutes or until golden brown. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004



Chocolate Yum-Yum Cake, page 136.

Dazzling Desserts

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Macadamia Fudge Cake

(Pictured above)

Our daughter and her husband operate a cookie factory in Hawaii. After she sent us a big supply of macadamia nuts, I came up with this cake for special dinners. —Marguerite Gough, Salida, Colorado

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup baking cocoa
- 1-1/2 teaspoons instant coffee granules
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

TOPPING:

- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 2/3 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 cups coarsely chopped macadamia nuts or almonds

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Beat in egg, sour cream and vanilla. Combine flour, cocoa, coffee, baking powder, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Pour into a greased 9-in. round baking pan.

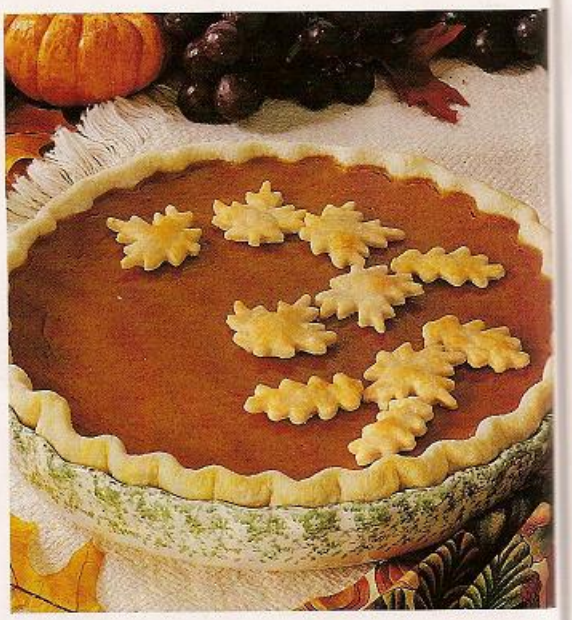
Bake at 350° for 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes; remove from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

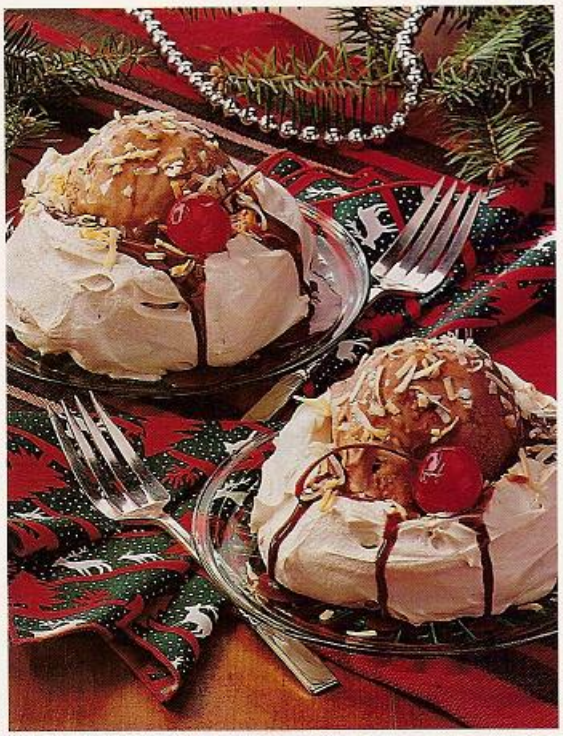
For topping, combine chocolate chips, cream, sugar, butter and corn syrup in a saucepan; bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to medium; cook and stir for 7 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla. Cool for 10-15 minutes. Beat with a wooden spoon until slightly thickened, about 4-5 minutes. Stir in nuts. Place cake on a serving plate; pour topping over cake. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Traditional Pumpkin Pie

(Pictured below)

Usually I prepare two different desserts for our holiday dinner, but one of them must be pumpkin pie. My version calls for more eggs than most, making this pie's pumpkin custard filling especially rich-tasting. —Gloria Warczak, Cedarburg, Wisconsin





2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup shortening
4 to 6 tablespoons cold water

FILLING:

6 eggs
1 can (29 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
2 cups packed brown sugar
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon *each* ground cloves, nutmeg and ginger
2 cups evaporated milk

In a bowl, combine flour and salt; cut in shortening until crumbly. Sprinkle with water, 1 tablespoon at a time, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Divide dough in half.

On a floured surface, roll out each portion to fit a 9-in. pie plate. Place pastry in plates; trim pastry (set scraps aside if leaf cutouts are desired) and flute edges. Set shells aside.

For filling, beat eggs in a mixing bowl. Add pumpkin, sugar, cinnamon, salt, cloves, nutmeg and ginger; beat just until smooth. Gradually stir in milk. Pour into pastry shells.

Bake at 450° for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°; bake 40-45 minutes longer or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on wire racks.

If desired, cut the pastry scraps with a 1-in. leaf-shaped cookie cutter; place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned. Place on baked pies. **Yield:** 2 pies (6-8 servings each).

Holiday Meringue Dessert

(Pictured at left)

This recipe's become our traditional dessert for Christmas dinner and seems appropriate for the season since the meringue shells look like mounds of snow. Whatever the topping, it's very festive.

—Catherine Morrison, Newport, Pennsylvania

1 egg white
1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar
1/8 teaspoon almond extract
Dash salt
1/3 cup sugar
2 scoops chocolate ice cream
Chocolate sauce
2 tablespoons flaked coconut, toasted
Maraschino cherries

Place egg white in a mixing bowl and let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Beat until foamy. Add cream of tartar, extract and salt; beat until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating on high until very stiff peaks form.

Cover a baking sheet with foil or parchment paper. Spoon the egg mixture into two mounds on paper. Using the back of a spoon, build up the edges slightly.

Bake at 300° for 35 minutes. Turn oven off; let shells dry in the oven for at least 1 hour with the door closed. To serve, fill shells with ice cream; top with chocolate sauce, coconut and cherries. **Yield:** 2 servings.

Upper Crust

A cool kitchen will help add to the success of making pastry crusts. In addition, the pie crust ingredients (even the flour) should be cold to produce the best results. And remember that any time you add water to the pie dough, the water should be iced.

Neapolitan Cheesecake

(Pictured below)

This rich, creamy cheesecake is a crowd-pleasing standout. It has won first-place ribbons at numerous fairs and is my family's favorite dessert. It's an indulgence sure to produce oohs and aahs when served to guests.
—Sherri Regalbuto, Carp, Ontario

1 cup chocolate wafer crumbs
5 tablespoons butter, melted, *divided*
3 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup sugar
3 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
5 squares (1 ounce *each*) semisweet chocolate, *divided*
2-1/2 squares (2-1/2 ounces) white baking chocolate, *divided*
1/3 cup mashed sweetened strawberries
2 teaspoons shortening, *divided*

Combine crumbs and 3 tablespoons of butter; press onto the bottom of an ungreased 9-in. springform pan. Bake at 350° for 8 minutes; cool.

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Add vanilla. Divide into three portions, about 1-2/3 cups each. Melt 2 squares semisweet chocolate; stir into one portion of batter. Melt 2 squares of white chocolate; stir into second portion. Stir strawberries into remaining batter. Spread semisweet mixture evenly over crust. Carefully spread with white chocolate mixture, then strawberry mixture.

Bake at 425° for 10 minutes; reduce heat to 300°. Bake 50-55 minutes or until center is nearly set. Remove from oven; immediately run a knife around edge. Cool; remove from pan.

Melt remaining semisweet chocolate, remaining butter and 1 teaspoon of shortening; cool for 2 minutes. Pour over cake. Melt remaining white chocolate and shortening; drizzle over glaze. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 12-14 servings.

Gingerbread with Brown Sugar Sauce

(Pictured above)

The aroma of this gingerbread is what I remember most about my grandmother's kitchen. That was decades ago, but whenever I catch a whiff of ginger and cinnamon, I'm back with Grandmother.
—Toni Hamm, Vandergrift, Pennsylvania

6 tablespoons shortening
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/3 cup molasses

- 1 egg
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup buttermilk

BROWN SUGAR SAUCE:

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 4-1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1/2 cup cold water
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vinegar
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl, cream shortening, brown sugar, molasses and egg; mix well. Combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger and salt; add to the molasses mixture alternately with buttermilk. Pour into a greased 9-in. round baking pan.

Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack.

For sauce, combine brown sugar, cornstarch, water and vinegar in a saucepan; stir until smooth. Add butter. Bring to a boil; boil and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in vanilla. Serve over gingerbread. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough Cheesecake

(Pictured at right)

I created this recipe to combine two of my all-time favorites—cheesecake for the grown-up in me and chocolate chip cookie dough for the little girl in me.

—Julie Craig, Jackson, Wisconsin

- 1-3/4 cups crushed chocolate chip cookies *or* chocolate wafer crumbs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup butter, melted

FILLING:

- 3 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

COOKIE DOUGH:

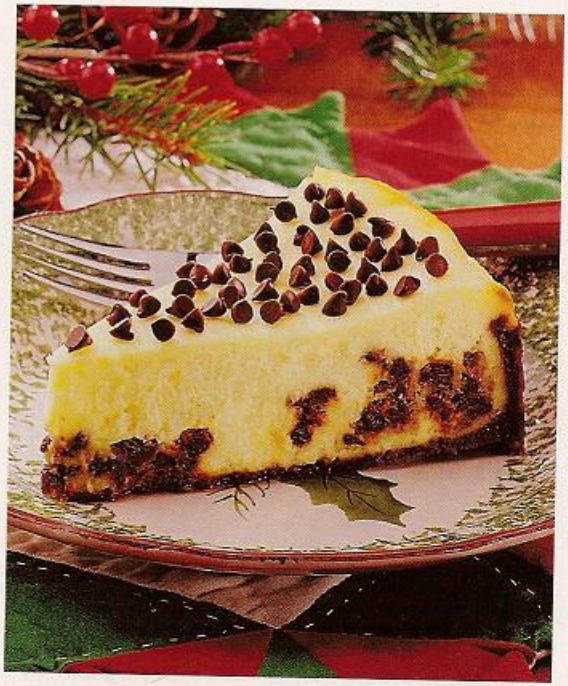
- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 cups miniature semisweet chocolate chips, *divided*

In a small bowl, combine cookie crumbs and sugar; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom and 1 in. up the sides of a greased 9-in. springform pan; set aside.

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add eggs; beat on low just until combined. Add sour cream and vanilla; beat just until blended. Pour over crust; set aside.

In another mixing bowl, cream butter and sugars on medium speed for 3 minutes. Add water and vanilla. Gradually add flour. Stir in 1 cup chocolate chips. Drop dough by teaspoonfuls over filling, gently pushing dough below surface (dough should be completely covered by filling).

Bake at 350° for 45-55 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight; remove sides of pan. Sprinkle with remaining chips. **Yield:** 12-14 servings.



Clockwise from top left: Almond Cranberry Tart, Cranberry Nut Dessert and Cranberry Ice.

Cranberry Nut Dessert

This wonderful no-crust dessert is loaded with cranberries and nuts. It's a seasonal favorite with my family.
—Peggy Van Arsdale, Trenton, New Jersey

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1/2 cup butter, melted
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
Whipped cream *or* ice cream, optional

In a bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt. Add cranberries and nuts; toss to coat. Stir in the butter, eggs and extract (mixture will be very thick if using frozen berries). Spread into a greased 9-in. pie plate.

Bake at 350° for 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream if desired. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Almond Cranberry Tart

Almonds add great flavor to the crust of this tasty tart. And because it needs to chill, this is a fantastic make-ahead dessert. —Billie Moss, El Sobrante, California

1-1/4 cups sugar, *divided*
1 cup finely chopped toasted slivered almonds
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup cold butter
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
1/4 cup water
1 package (12 ounces) fresh *or* frozen cranberries
1/2 cup red currant jelly
Whipped cream and additional chopped almonds, optional

In a bowl, combine 1/4 cup sugar, almonds and flour. Cut in the butter until crumbly. Beat egg and vanilla; add to flour mixture and stir until moistened. Cover and chill for 30 minutes.

Coat fingers with flour and press mixture into the bottom and 1-1/2 in. up the sides of a greased 9-in. springform pan. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool.

Meanwhile, soften gelatin in water; set aside. In a saucepan, cook cranberries, jelly and remaining sugar over medium-low heat until berries pop. Remove from the heat; stir in gelatin until dissolved. Cool; pour into crust. Chill for at least 4 hours. Garnish with whipped cream and almonds if desired. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Cranberry Ice

Cranberries, lemon and orange meld together to make a refreshing ice that really hits the spot after a heavy holiday meal. —Eleanor Dunbar, Peoria, Illinois

4 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries
4 cups cold water, *divided*
1 package (3 ounces) lemon gelatin
2 cups boiling water
3 cups sugar
1/2 cup lemon juice
1/2 cup orange juice

In a saucepan, bring cranberries and 2 cups cold water to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 5 minutes. Press through a strainer to remove skins; set juice aside and discard skins.

In a bowl, stir gelatin, boiling water and sugar until dissolved. Add cranberry, lemon and orange juices and remaining cold water. Pour into a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. pan.

Cover and freeze until ice begins to form around the edges of the pan, about 1-1/2 hours; stir. Freeze until mushy, about 30 minutes. Spoon into a freezer container; cover and freeze. **Yield:** 20 servings.

Cranberries: The Tart To Great Desserts

- You can store cranberries in an airtight plastic bag in the refrigerator for at least 1 month; frozen for up to 1 year.
- Make quick work of chopping cranberries by using a food processor with a metal blade. Use quick on/off pulses until they are chopped.
- Cook cranberries only until they pop; otherwise, they can turn mushy and bitter.

Caramel Fudge Cheesecake

(Pictured below)

It's hard to resist this chocolaty cheesecake with its fudgy crust, crunchy pecans and gooey caramel layer. I combined recipes to create this version, which satisfies my family's chocolate lovers and cheesecake lovers.

—Brenda Ruse, Truro, Nova Scotia

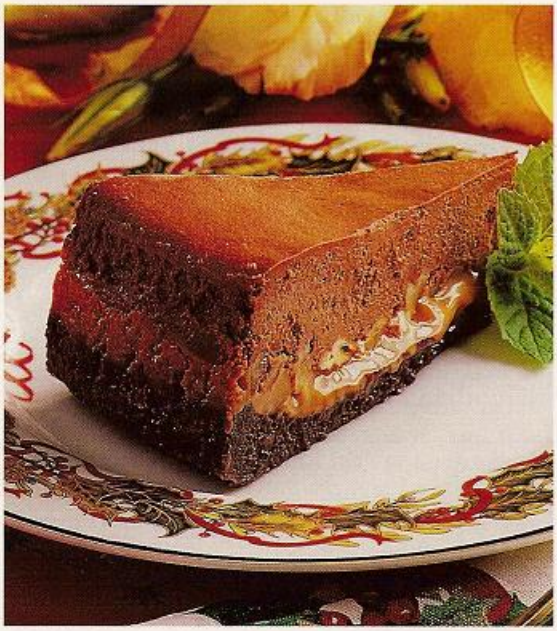
- **1 package fudge brownie mix (8-inch square pan size)**
- **1 package (14 ounces) caramels***
- **1/4 cup evaporated milk**
- **1-1/4 cups coarsely chopped pecans**
- **2 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened**
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **2 squares (1 ounce *each*) semisweet chocolate, melted**
- **2 squares (1 ounce *each*) unsweetened chocolate, melted**

Prepare brownie batter according to the package directions. Spread into a greased 9-in. springform pan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes on a wire rack. Meanwhile, in a microwave-safe bowl, melt caramels with milk. Pour over brownie crust; sprinkle with pecans.

In a mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese and sugar; mix well. Add eggs, beating on low speed just until combined. Stir in melted chocolate. Pour over pecans.

Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until the center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool completely. Chill overnight. Remove sides of pan before serving. Store leftovers in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 12 servings.

***Editor's Note:** This recipe was tested using Hershey caramels.



Cherry Banana Cream Pie

(Pictured above)

This dessert has a crunchy crust spread with a rich butter layer, topped with a filling flavored with banana, cherries and chocolate. Guests tell me the pie reminds them of a banana split...and then ask for seconds.

—Denise Elder, Hanover, Ontario

- **3/4 cup butter, softened, *divided***
- **2 cups crushed vanilla wafers (about 60)**
- **3/4 cup confectioners' sugar**

FILLING:

- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **2 tablespoons baking cocoa**
- **1 cup chopped walnuts**
- **1 large firm banana, thinly sliced**
- **1/3 cup halved maraschino cherries**

Whipped topping, chocolate curls and additional maraschino cherries

Melt 1/2 cup of butter; toss with the wafer crumbs. Press into a 9-in. pie plate. In a small mixing bowl, cream the remaining butter; beat in confectioners' sugar until combined. Spread over the crust.

In another mixing bowl, beat the cream, sugar and cocoa until stiff peaks form. Fold in walnuts, banana and maraschino cherries. Spoon into crust.

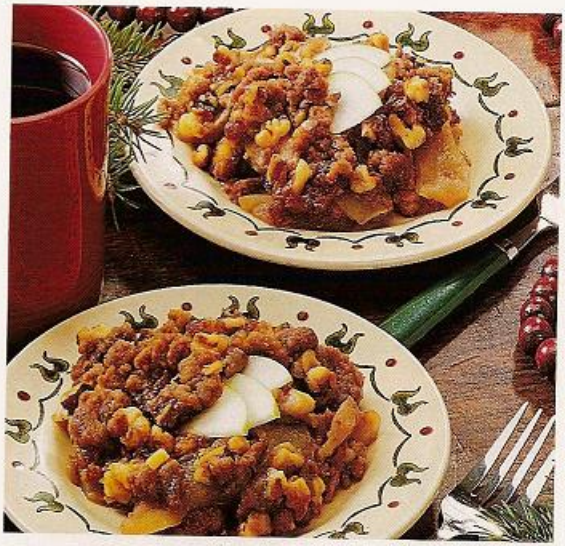
Cover and refrigerate the pie for 8 hours or overnight. Garnish with whipped topping, chocolate curls and cherries. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Heirloom Fruitcake

When I couldn't find a recipe for fruitcake made with butter, honey, eggs and cream, I created this one. I like this cake because it's not as sweet as many traditional varieties. —Sharon McClatchey, Muskogee, Oklahoma

- **1/3 cup butter, softened**
- **3 tablespoons brown sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **3 tablespoons honey**
- **1/2 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/8 teaspoon ground allspice**
- **1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **2 tablespoons half-and-half cream**
- **1 cup raisins**
- **1 cup chopped dates**
- **1 package (6 ounces) dried apricots, finely chopped**
- **3 cups pecan halves**

In a mixing bowl, cream the butter, sugar, eggs and honey. Combine dry ingredients; add to creamed mixture alternately with cream. Beat in raisins, dates, apricots and pecans. Pack into two greased and floured 7-3/4-in. x 3-5/8-in. x 2-1/4-in. loaf pans. Place pans on middle rack of oven; place a shallow pan of hot water on lowest rack.



Bake at 300° for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool completely in pan. Loosen edges with a knife and remove from pan. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Apple Date Crisp

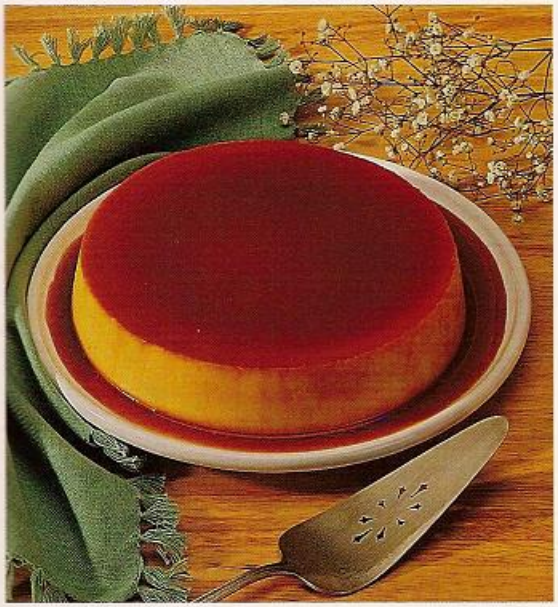
(Pictured above)

My mother loves to make this old-fashioned dessert, and my father, brother and I love to eat it. Each serving is chock-full of apple slices, crunchy nuts and chewy dates. It's a satisfying way to end a delicious meal.
—Karin Cousineau, Burlington, North Carolina

- **8 cups sliced peeled tart apples**
- **2 cups chopped dates**
- **2/3 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1/2 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/3 cup cold butter**
- **1 cup chopped nuts**

Additional apple slices, optional

Combine the apples and dates in an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. In a small bowl, combine sugar, flour and cinnamon; cut in butter until crumbly. Add nuts; sprinkle over apples. Bake at 375° for 35-40 minutes or until apples are tender. Serve warm. Garnish with apple slices if desired. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.



Creamy Caramel Flan

(Pictured above)

If you're unfamiliar with flan, think of it as a tasty variation on custard. One warning, though—it's very filling. A small slice goes a long way! —Pat Forte
Miami, Florida

- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **5 eggs**
- **1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
- **1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

In a heavy saucepan over medium-low heat, cook and stir sugar until melted and golden, about 15 minutes. Quickly pour into an ungreased 2-qt. round baking or souffle dish, tilting to coat the bottom; let stand for 10 minutes.

In a mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese until smooth. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add remaining ingredients; mix well. Pour over caramelized sugar. Place the dish in a larger baking pan. Pour boiling water into larger pan to a depth of 1 in.

Bake at 350° for 50-60 minutes or until center is just set (mixture will jiggle). Remove dish from larger pan to a wire rack; cool for 1 hour. Refrigerate overnight. To unmold, run a knife around edges and invert onto a large rimmed serving platter. Cut into wedges or spoon onto dessert plates; spoon sauce over each serving. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Cranberry Sauce Cake

(Pictured below)

This moist cake is so easy to make because it's mixed in one bowl. Slice it at the table so everyone can see how beautiful it is. —Marge Clark, West Lebanon, Indiana

- **3 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce**
- **1 cup mayonnaise***
- **1/3 cup orange juice**
- **1 tablespoon grated orange peel**
- **1 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1 teaspoon orange extract**
- **1 cup chopped walnuts**

ICING:

- **1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1 to 2 tablespoons orange juice**

In a mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, cranberry sauce, mayonnaise, orange juice and peel, baking soda, salt and orange extract; mix well. Fold in walnuts.

Cut waxed or parchment paper to fit the bottom of a 10-in. tube pan. Spray the pan and paper with nonstick cooking spray. Pour batter into paper-lined pan. Bake at 350° for 60-70 minutes or until the cake tests done. Cool 10 minutes in

pan before removing to a wire rack. Combine icing ingredients; drizzle over the warm cake. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

***Editor's Note:** Reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise may not be substituted for regular mayonnaise in this recipe.

Pecan Fudge Pie

This fudgy pie is the perfect showcase for crunchy pecans. It's a special chocolaty twist on traditional pecan pie. Top it with whipped cream, and you won't wait long for compliments! —*Jacquelyn Smith, Soperton, Georgia*

1-1/4 cups light corn syrup
1/2 cup sugar
1/3 cup baking cocoa
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
3 eggs
3 tablespoons butter, softened
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup chopped pecans
1 unbaked pastry shell (9 inches)
Whipped cream, optional

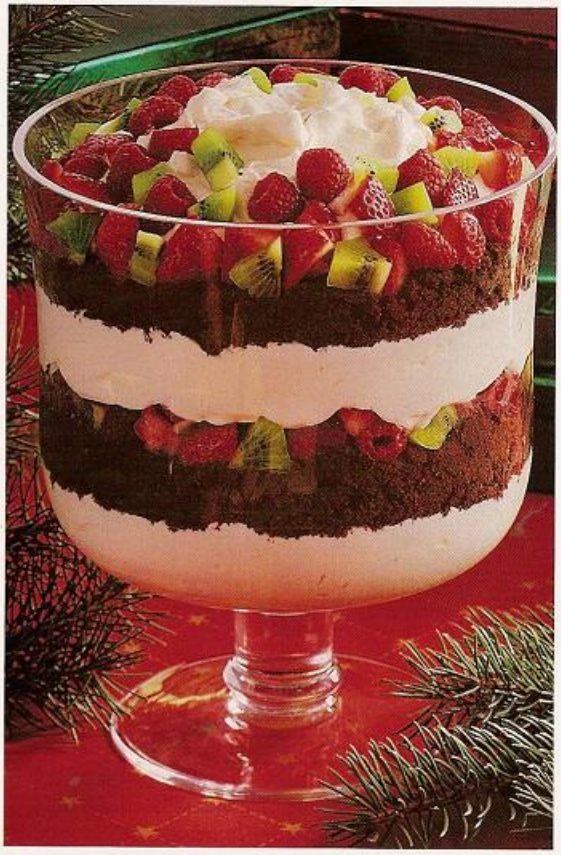
In a large mixing bowl, beat the first eight ingredients until smooth. Stir in nuts; pour into pie shell. Bake at 350° for 55-60 minutes or until set. Cool completely. Garnish with whipped cream if desired. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Chocolate and Fruit Trifle

(Pictured above right)

Layers of devil's food cake, a creamy pudding mixture, red berries and green kiwi are perfect for the holidays. I like making it in a clear glass trifle bowl to show off its festive colors. —*Angie Dierikx, State Center, Iowa*

1 package (18-1/4 ounces) devil's food cake mix
1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
1 cup cold water
1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix
2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped

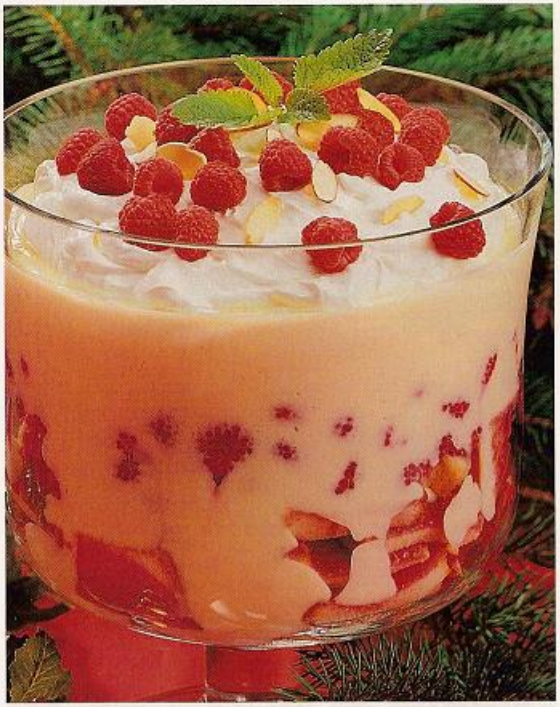


2 tablespoons orange juice
2 cups fresh strawberries, chopped
2 cups fresh raspberries
2 kiwifruit, peeled and chopped

Prepare cake batter according to package directions; pour into a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool completely on a wire rack. Crumble enough cake to measure 8 cups; set aside. (Save remaining cake for another use.)

In a mixing bowl, combine milk and water until smooth. Add pudding mix; beat on low speed for 2 minutes or until slightly thickened. Fold in the whipped cream.

To assemble, spread 2-1/2 cups pudding mixture in a 4-qt. glass bowl. Top with half of the crumbled cake; sprinkle with 1 tablespoon orange juice. Arrange half of the berries and kiwi over cake. Repeat pudding and cake layers; sprinkle with remaining orange juice. Top with remaining pudding mixture. Spoon remaining fruit around edge of bowl. Cover and refrigerate until serving. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.



Raspberry Trifle

(Pictured above)

The first time I served my trifle was for a family dinner. Everyone loved it! I've since found that it also goes over well at potlucks and buffet dinners.

—Betty Howlett, Elmira, Ontario

- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **3 tablespoons cornstarch**
- **3 cups milk**
- **4 egg yolks, beaten**
- **2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- **1 loaf (1 pound) frozen pound cake, thawed**
- **3/4 cup raspberry jam**
- **3 cups fresh *or* frozen unsweetened raspberries, thawed and drained**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar**
- **2 tablespoons sliced almonds, toasted**
- **Fresh raspberries, optional**

In a saucepan, combine the sugar and cornstarch. Stir in milk until smooth. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until thickened and bubbly. Reduce heat; cook and stir 2 minutes longer. Remove from heat. Stir a small amount of hot filling into egg yolks; return all to pan, stirring constantly. Bring to a gentle boil; cook and stir 2 minutes longer. Remove from heat. Stir in vanilla. Pour into a bowl and cover with waxed paper. Chill 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, cut cake into 3/4-in. slices; spread with jam. Cut each slice into thirds; place with jam side up in a 3-qt. trifle dish or a deep salad bowl.

Cover with berries. Top with custard. Cover and chill overnight. Just before serving, whip cream and sugar until stiff; spread over custard. Garnish with almonds and berries if desired. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

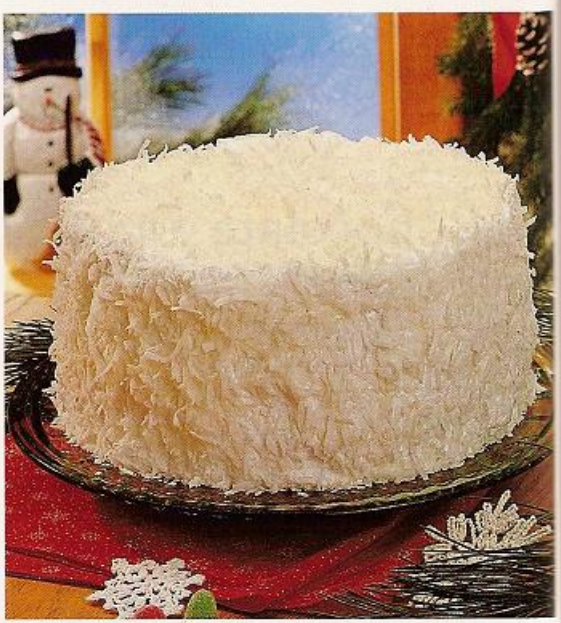
Snowflake Cake

(Pictured below)

The coconut sprinkled on this old-fashioned fluffy frosting gives the impression of snow inside the house without the cold. It's a beautiful dessert that is a fitting end to a delicious meal.

—Lynne Peterson, Salt Lake City, Utah

- **2 eggs plus 4 egg yolks**
- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **1 cup milk**
- **1/2 cup butter**



2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup chopped nuts, optional

FROSTING:

1-3/4 cups sugar
1/2 cup water
4 egg whites
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups flaked coconut

In a mixing bowl, beat eggs, yolks and sugar until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. In a saucepan, heat milk and butter until butter is melted. Combine flour and baking powder; add to egg mixture alternately with milk mixture. Beat until well mixed. Add vanilla. Fold in nuts if desired. Pour into three greased 9-in. round baking pans.

Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool in pans 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack to cool completely.

For frosting, in a saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil. Boil 3-4 minutes or until a candy thermometer reads 242° (firm-ball stage). Meanwhile, beat egg whites and cream of tartar in a mixing bowl until foamy. Slowly pour in hot sugar mixture and continue to beat on high for 6-8 minutes or until stiff peaks form. Add vanilla.

Frost the tops of two cake layers and sprinkle with coconut; stack on a cake plate with plain layer on top. Frost sides and top of cake; sprinkle with coconut. Refrigerate for several hours. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

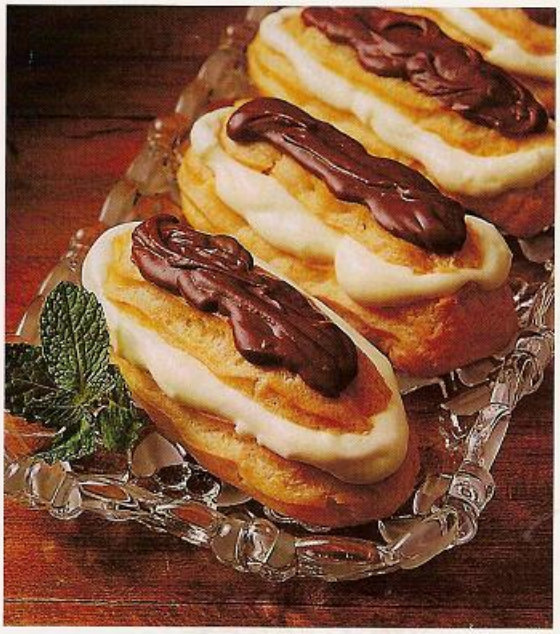
Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

Chocolate Eclairs

(Pictured above right)

I won the grand prize with this recipe at a "Chocolate Lovers Cook-Off" contest in our town. This is one of my most-requested desserts. —*Janet Davis*
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

1 cup water
1/2 cup butter
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 eggs



FILLING:

2-1/2 cups cold milk
1 package (5.1 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1/4 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

CHOCOLATE ICING:

2 squares (1 ounce *each*) semisweet chocolate
2 tablespoons butter
1 cup confectioners' sugar
2 to 3 tablespoons hot water

In a saucepan over medium heat, bring water and butter to a boil. Add flour and salt all at once; stir until a smooth ball forms. Remove from heat. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

With a tablespoon or a pastry bag with a No. 10 or larger tip, spoon or pipe dough into 4-in.-long x 1-1/2-in.-wide strips on a greased baking sheet. Bake at 450° for 15 minutes. Reduce the heat to 325°; bake 20 minutes longer. Cool on a wire rack.

For filling, combine milk and pudding mix; mix according to package directions. In a mixing bowl, beat cream until soft peaks form. Beat in sugar and vanilla; fold into pudding. Fill cooled shells. (Chill remaining pudding for another use.)

For icing, melt chocolate and butter in a saucepan over low heat. Stir in sugar. Add hot water until icing is smooth and reaches desired consistency. Cool slightly. Spread over the eclairs. Chill until serving. **Yield:** 8-9 servings.

Crimson Devonshire Cream

(Pictured above)

Once when my mom was preparing a holiday dinner, she served this lighter dessert. Ever since then, we have all looked forward to this delicious treat.
—Cindy Cafasso, Barrington, New Hampshire

1 teaspoon unflavored gelatin
3/4 cup cold water
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1/2 cup sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream

CRIMSON SAUCE:

2-1/4 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries, *divided*
1-1/3 cups water
1/4 cup orange juice
4 teaspoons grated orange peel
3/4 cup sugar

In a saucepan, soften gelatin in water; heat over low until gelatin dissolves. Cool. In a mixing bowl, beat cream, sugar and vanilla until soft peaks form. Combine the gelatin mixture and sour cream; mix well. Gently whisk into the cream mixture.

Pour into small bowls or parfait glasses. Refrigerate until set, about 1 hour.

For sauce, combine 1-1/2 cups cranberries, water, orange juice and peel in a saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Sieve sauce, discarding skins. Return sauce to pan; add sugar and remaining cranberries. Cook over medium heat until berries pop, about 8 minutes. Chill. Spoon over each serving. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Pumpkin Chiffon Torte

(Pictured below)

After a sumptuous holiday meal, this light and tasty dessert is perfect. It's a deliciously different way to feature the flavor of pumpkin. *—Lynn Kumm Osmond, Nebraska*

1 cup finely crushed gingersnaps (about 24)
3 tablespoons butter, melted
2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup sugar
1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
Additional whipped topping, optional

In a small bowl, combine cookie crumbs and butter. Press onto the bottom of a greased 9-in. springform pan; set aside. In a saucepan, combine gelatin and milk; let stand for 5 minutes.

Heat milk mixture to just below boiling; remove from the heat. Stir in sugar until dissolved. Add the pumpkin, salt, cinnamon, ginger and cloves; mix well. Fold in whipped topping. Pour over crust.

Refrigerate until set, about 3 hours. Remove sides of pan just before serving. Garnish with additional whipped topping if desired. **Yield:** 16 servings.

Cranberry Cheesecake

The holidays wouldn't be complete without cranberries and eggnog. I use them both in this flavorful and lovely cheesecake. It's a perfect finale for Christmas dinner. —*Nancy Zimmerman*
Cape May Court House, New Jersey

1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 cup cranberry juice
1-1/2 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries

CRUST:

1 cup graham cracker crumbs (about 14 squares)
3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons butter, melted

FILLING:

4 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
1 cup sugar
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 eggs
1 cup eggnog*
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

In a saucepan, combine the first four ingredients; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook and stir over medium heat for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat; set aside. In a small bowl, combine cracker crumbs and sugar; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom of a greased 9-in. springform pan. Bake at 325° for 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add flour and beat well. Add eggs; beat on low just until combined. Add eggnog and vanilla; beat just until blended. Pour two-thirds of the filling over crust. Top with half of the cranberry mixture (cover and chill remaining cranberry mixture). Carefully spoon remaining filling on top. Bake at 325° for 60-70 minutes or until center is almost set.

Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight. Remove sides of pan. Spoon remaining cranberry mixture over cheesecake. **Yield:** 12 servings.

***Editor's Note:** This recipe was tested with commercially prepared eggnog.

Pecan Tarts

(Pictured above)

The flaky crust combined with a rich center makes these little tarts a satisfying snack to serve and eat. They look so appealing on a pretty platter and make a great dessert when you're entertaining. —*Jean Rhodes*
Tignall, Georgia

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt

FILLING:

1 egg
3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1 tablespoon butter, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2/3 cup chopped pecans
Maraschino cherry halves, optional

In a mixing bowl, beat butter and cream cheese; blend in flour and salt. Refrigerate for 1 hour. Shape into 1-in. balls; press into the bottom and up the sides of greased miniature muffin cups.

For filling, beat the egg in a small mixing bowl. Add sugar, butter and vanilla; mix well. Stir in pecans. Spoon into shells. Bake at 325° for 25-30 minutes. Cool in pan on a wire rack. Decorate with maraschino cherries if desired. **Yield:** about 20 tarts.

Pecan Cake Roll

(Pictured below)

When I was still teaching, I'd bring this dessert to share with the other faculty and staff. It'd usually be gone before the school day ever started! —*Shirley Awald*
Walkerton, Indiana

4 eggs, *separated*
1 cup confectioners' sugar
2 cups ground pecans
1 cup heavy whipping cream
3 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons baking cocoa
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
Chocolate shavings and additional confectioners' sugar, optional

In a mixing bowl, beat egg yolks and confectioners' sugar until thick, about 5 minutes. In another bowl, beat whites until soft peaks form; fold into yolk mixture. Fold in pecans until well blended (batter will be thin).

Grease a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan; line with waxed paper and grease and flour the paper. Spread batter into pan. Bake at 375° for 10-15 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched. Turn onto a linen towel dusted with confectioners' sugar. Peel off paper and roll cake up in towel, starting with short end. Cool on wire rack 1 hour.

Meanwhile, beat the cream, sugar, cocoa and vanilla in a mixing bowl until soft peaks form. Carefully unroll cake. Spread filling over cake; roll up again. Refrigerate. If desired, garnish with chocolate shavings and confectioners' sugar. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

Editor's Note: This cake does not contain flour.

Fluffy Cranberry Cheese Pie

(Pictured above right)

This pie has a light texture and zippy flavor that is festive for the holidays or anytime. And, even though it looks fancy, it's easy to make. —*Mary Parkonen*
W. Wareham, Massachusetts

CRANBERRY TOPPING:

- **1 package (3 ounces) raspberry gelatin**
- **1/3 cup sugar**
- **1-1/4 cups cranberry juice**
- **1 can (8 ounces) jellied cranberry sauce**

FILLING:

- **1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **1 tablespoon milk**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1/2 cup frozen whipped topping**
- **1 pastry shell (9 inches), baked**

In a mixing bowl, combine gelatin and sugar; set aside. In a saucepan, bring cranberry juice to a boil. Remove from the heat and pour over gelatin mixture, stirring to dissolve. Stir in the cranberry sauce. Chill until slightly thickened.

Meanwhile, in another mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, sugar, milk and vanilla until fluffy. Fold in the whipped topping. Spread evenly into pie shell. Beat cranberry topping until frothy; pour over filling. Chill overnight. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Apple Cranberry Tart

(Pictured at right)

People practically inhale this dessert. I modified a recipe years ago to come up with a different way of using cranberries, a favorite fruit of mine. —*Jo Ann Fisher*
Huntington Beach, California

- **1-1/3 cups sugar**
- **1-1/4 cups unsweetened apple juice *or* cider, *divided***
- **3 medium tart apples, peeled and cubed**
- **1 package (12 ounces) fresh *or* frozen cranberries**
- **1/2 cup all-purpose flour**

Pastry for single-crust pie (10 inches)

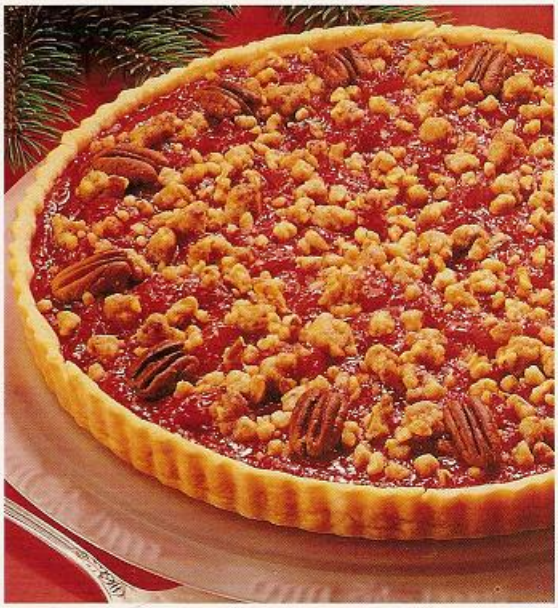
TOPPING:

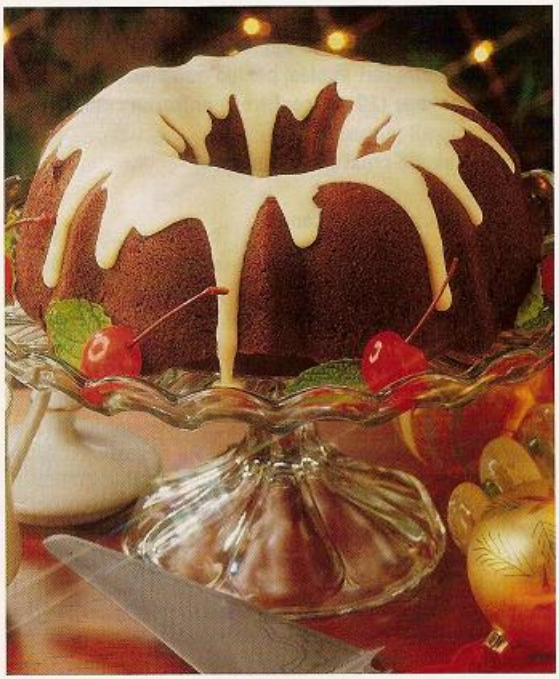
- **1/3 cup chopped pecans**
- **1/3 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- **3 tablespoons butter, melted**
- **12 pecan halves**

In a saucepan over medium heat, bring sugar and 3/4 cup apple juice to a boil, stirring occasionally. Add apples and cranberries; return to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, until apples are tender and berries pop, about 5-8 minutes. Whisk flour and remaining juice until smooth; stir into cranberry mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Cool to room temperature.

Fit pastry into an 11-in. fluted tart pan with removable bottom, or press onto the bottom and 1 in. up the sides of a 10-in. springform pan. Line pastry with double thickness of heavy-duty foil.

Bake at 450° for 5 minutes. Remove foil; bake 7-10 minutes or until pastry is nearly done. Cool. Add apple mixture. Combine first four topping ingredients; sprinkle over filling. Arrange pecan halves on top. Bake at 375° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. **Yield:** 12 servings.





Chocolate Yum-Yum Cake

(Pictured above and on page 119)

My grandmother first made this cake, and my mother made it often when I was a little girl. You can frost it or just sprinkle it with a little powdered sugar.

—Dorothy Colli, West Hartford, Connecticut

- **1/2 cup butter**
- **2 squares (1 ounce *each*) unsweetened baking chocolate**
- **1-1/2 cups water**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1/2 cup raisins**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cloves**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- **Pinch salt**
- **1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon baking soda**

ICING:

- **1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1 to 2 teaspoons milk**
- **1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**

In a large saucepan over low heat, melt butter and chocolate, stirring constantly. Add water, sugar, raisins, cinnamon and cloves; bring to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat; pour into a mixing bowl and cool for 15 minutes. Add vanilla and salt. Combine flour and baking soda; add to chocolate mixture and mix well. Pour into a greased and floured 8-cup fluted tube pan.

Bake at 350° for 45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack to cool. Combine icing ingredients; spoon over cooled cake. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Editor's Note: An 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking pan can be used. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until cake tests done.

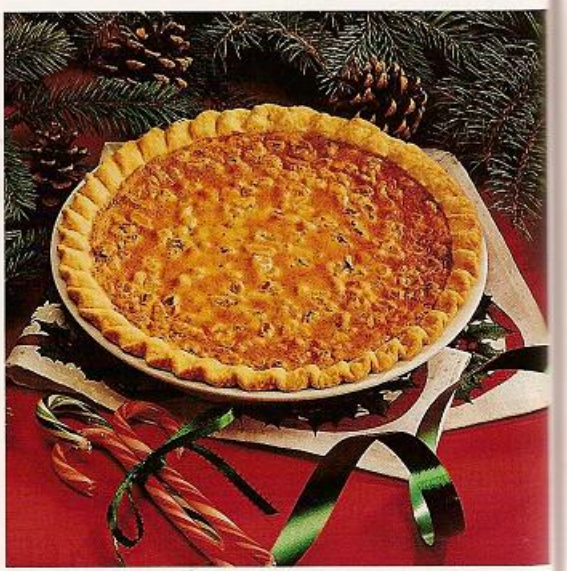
Walnut Mincemeat Pie

(Pictured below)

As a cold and tasty finishing touch, my husband and I usually put a dip of ice cream on top of this pie. The recipe comes from my mother. Each year, I make it for Christmas and for my sister-in-law's New Year's party.

—Laverne Kamp, Kutztown, Pennsylvania

- **2 eggs**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1/8 teaspoon salt**



- **2 cups prepared mincemeat**
- **1/2 cup chopped walnuts**
- **1/4 cup butter, melted**
- **1 unbaked pastry shell (9 inches)**

In a small mixing bowl, lightly beat eggs. Combine sugar, flour and salt; gradually add to eggs. Stir in mincemeat, nuts and butter; pour into pastry shell.

Bake at 400° for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 325°; bake for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool completely. Store in refrigerator. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Eggnog Cake

(Pictured at right)

With its moist cake layers, creamy filling and chocolate frosting, this cake appeals to all palates!
—Edith Disch, Fairview Park, Ohio

- **1/2 cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar, *divided***
- **2 eggs, *separated***
- **3/4 cup orange juice**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons grated orange peel**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **2 cups sifted cake flour**
- **2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **1/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**

EGGNOG FILLING:

- **5 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1-1/4 cups eggnog***
- **1 cup butter, softened**
- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg**

CHOCOLATE ICING:

- **2 squares (1 ounce *each*) unsweetened baking chocolate, melted**
- **2/3 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **3 tablespoons butter, softened**
- **2 tablespoons heavy whipping cream**
- **2 to 3 tablespoons hot water**

Cream butter and 3/4 cup sugar. Add yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine orange juice, peel and vanilla. Combine the next five ingredients; add to creamed mixture alternately with juice mixture, beating well. In another bowl, beat whites until foamy; gradually add remaining sugar, beating until soft peaks form. Fold into batter.

Line two greased 9-in. round baking pans with waxed paper; grease paper. Pour batter into pans. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes or until cake tests done. Cool 5 minutes; remove to wire rack. Peel off paper; cool.

For filling, combine flour and a small amount of eggnog in a pan; stir until smooth. Stir in remaining eggnog; bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir 2 minutes. Cool completely. Cream butter and confectioners' sugar; add vanilla and nutmeg. Gradually beat in eggnog mixture.

For frosting, mix chocolate, confectioners' sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. Beat in butter and cream. Add water until frosting reaches desired consistency. Split cakes in half; spread filling on three layers. Stack with plain layer on top; frost the top. **Yield:** 14 servings.

***Editor's Note:** This recipe was tested with commercially prepared eggnog.

The Cake Divide

One way to make splitting a cake easier is to stick toothpicks at 1-1/2 in. intervals at the level you want to cut. Let the toothpicks guide you as you use a long, thin (preferably serrated) knife to cut the cake in half.

Cinnamon Apple Dumplings

(Pictured below)

When Mom made pies to feed the crew during wheat harvest, she always had plenty of dough left over, so she treated us kids to these special apple dumplings.

—Marie Hattrup, The Dalles, Oregon

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/3 cup shortening
3 tablespoons ice water
2 medium tart apples
3 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
Half-and-half cream
SAUCE:
1/3 cup sugar
2 tablespoons red-hot candies *or* 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cornstarch
2/3 cup water
1 tablespoon butter
Additional half-and-half cream, optional

In a medium bowl, combine flour and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. With a fork, stir in water until dough forms a ball. Roll out on a floured surface to a 14-in. x 7-in. rectangle; cut pastry in half.

Peel and core apples; place one on each square of pastry. Combine sugar and cinnamon; spoon into apples. Moisten edges of pastry and gather around apples; pinch and seal.

Place dumplings in an ungreased 9-in. x 5-in. loaf pan or a shallow 1-1/2-qt. baking dish. Brush with cream.

In a small saucepan, combine the first five sauce ingredients; bring to a boil over medium-low heat, stirring frequently. Boil for 3 minutes. Pour between dumplings.

Bake at 400° for 35-45 minutes or until pastry is golden brown and apples are tender. Serve warm with cream if desired. **Yield:** 2 servings.

Coconut Fruitcake

(Pictured above)

A neighbor gave me this recipe when we first moved to this small town, saying it dated back to the 1800s and everybody in the area made it. I soon discovered why when I took a taste...and I'm not a fruitcake fan!

—Lorraine Groh, Ferryville, Wisconsin

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 pound chopped fruitcake mix
1-1/2 cups flaked coconut

- **1 cup golden raisins**
- **1 cup chopped nuts**
- **1/2 cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **3 eggs, beaten**
- **1 teaspoon lemon extract**
- **1/2 cup orange juice**
- **Additional candied fruit *or* nuts, optional**

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Add fruitcake mix, coconut, raisins and nuts; mix well.

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and extract; mix well. Stir in the flour mixture alternately with orange juice. Pack into a greased 10-in. tube pan lined with waxed paper.

Bake at 250° for 2 to 2-1/2 hours or until cake tests done. Cool for 10 minutes. Loosen edges with a sharp knife. Remove from pan to cool completely on a wire rack. Garnish with candied fruit or nuts if desired. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Harvest Sweet Potato Pie

My father called this "royal pie", fit for a king with its deliciously different flavor. This is a hand-me-down recipe, a treasure in our family. —*Fae Fisher*
Callao, Virginia

- **4 eggs**
- **1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk**
- **1-1/4 cups sugar**
- **3/4 cup butter, melted**
- **2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- **2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1 teaspoon lemon extract**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **4 cups mashed cooked sweet potatoes**
- **2 unbaked pastry shells (9 inches)**
- **Whipped cream, optional**

In a mixing bowl, combine the first 10 ingredients; mix well. Beat in sweet potatoes. Pour into pastry shells. Bake at 425° for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°; bake 30-35 minutes longer or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool completely. Serve with whipped cream if desired. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Old-Fashioned Rice Pudding

(Pictured above)

This comforting dessert is a wonderful end to any meal. As a girl, I waited eagerly for the first heavenly bite. Today, my husband tops his with a scoop of ice cream. —*Sandra Melnychenko, Grandview, Manitoba*

- **4-1/2 cups milk**
- **1/2 cup uncooked long grain rice**
- **1/3 cup sugar**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt, optional**
- **1/2 cup raisins**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **Ground cinnamon, optional**

In a saucepan, combine milk, rice, sugar and salt if desired; bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Pour into a greased 1-1/2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 325° for 45 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes. Add raisins and vanilla; cover and bake for 15 minutes. Sprinkle with cinnamon if desired. Serve warm or chilled. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** about 6 servings.

Black Forest Torte

(Pictured above)

I'm proud to prepare this delectable dessert for family and friends alike. Folks love the chocolate cake layers separated by a dreamy cream filling. —*Glatis McNiel Constantine, Michigan*

- **1-1/3 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1-3/4 cups sugar**
- **1-1/4 teaspoons baking soda**
- **1/4 teaspoon baking powder**
- **2/3 cup butter**
- **4 squares (1 ounce *each*) unsweetened chocolate**
- **1-1/4 cups water**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **3 eggs**

CHOCOLATE FILLING:

- **2 bars (4 ounces *each*) German sweet chocolate, *divided***
- **3/4 cup butter**
- **1/2 cup chopped pecans**

CREAM FILLING:

- **2 cups heavy whipping cream**
- **1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

In a mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda and baking powder. In a saucepan, melt butter and chocolate; cool. Pour chocolate mixture, water and vanilla into flour mixture. Beat on low for 1 minute, then on medium for 2 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Divide batter among two 9-in. round pans that have been greased, floured and lined with waxed paper. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until cakes test done. Cool in pans 10 minutes. Remove to a wire rack.

For chocolate filling, melt 1-1/2 bars of German chocolate over low heat. Stir in butter and nuts. Watching closely, cool filling just until it reaches spreading consistency. For cream filling, whip cream with sugar and vanilla until stiff peaks form.

To assemble, slice cooled cake layers in half horizontally. Place one bottom layer on a serving platter; cover with half of the chocolate filling. Top with a second cake layer; spread on half of the cream filling. Repeat layers. Grate remaining German chocolate; sprinkle on the top. Refrigerate until serving. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Gingerbread Yule Log

(Pictured below)

Whenever our family gets together for the holidays, this is what I'm asked to bring. I've made it for parties, too, and there have never been any leftovers.

—Bernadette Colvin, Houston, Texas

- **3 eggs, *separated***
- **1/2 cup molasses**
- **1 tablespoon butter, melted**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **3/4 teaspoon *each* baking powder and baking soda**

1/2 teaspoon *each* ground cinnamon, ginger and cloves
1/8 teaspoon salt

SPICED CREAM FILLING:

1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
1/3 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
Additional ground cinnamon, optional

In a mixing bowl, beat yolks on high until thickened, about 3 minutes. Beat in molasses and butter. In another bowl, beat whites until foamy; gradually add sugar, beating until soft peaks form. Fold into yolk mixture. Combine dry ingredients; gently fold into egg mixture until well mixed. Spread in a greased and floured waxed paper-lined 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 375° for 9-12 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly touched.

Turn onto a linen towel dusted with confectioners' sugar. Peel off paper and roll cake up in towel, starting with a short side. Cool on a wire rack. Meanwhile, beat the first five filling ingredients in a mixing bowl until soft peaks form. Unroll cake; spread with half the filling. Roll up. Place on serving plate. Spread remaining filling over cake. Sprinkle with cinnamon if desired. **Yield:** 10 servings.

German Chocolate Ice Cream

(Pictured above right)

I found this recipe years ago and have taken it to ice cream socials ever since.—Peggy Key, Grant, Alabama

1-1/2 cups sugar
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 cups milk
3 eggs, beaten
1 quart half-and-half cream
2 packages (4 ounces *each*) German sweet chocolate, melted
1 cup flaked coconut
1 cup chopped pecans

In a large heavy saucepan, combine the sugar, flour, cinnamon and salt. Gradually add milk and eggs; stir until smooth. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until mixture is thick enough to coat a metal spoon and reaches 160°, about 15 minutes. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Fill ice cream freezer cylinder two-thirds full; freeze according to manufacturer's instructions. Refrigerate remaining mixture until ready to freeze. Remove ice cream from the freezer 10 minutes before serving. **Yield:** 1 gallon.

Pineapple Upside-Down Cake

You need just a few easy ingredients to dress up a boxed mix. It bakes up so moist and pretty, no one will believe it wasn't made from scratch. —*Gloria Poyer, Hackettstown, New Jersey*

6 canned pineapple slices
6 maraschino cherries
1 cup chopped walnuts, divided
1 package (18-1/4 ounces) white cake mix

Place pineapple slices in a greased and floured 10-in. tube pan. Place a cherry in the center of each slice. Sprinkle half of the walnuts around the pineapple. Prepare cake mix according to package directions; spoon batter over pineapple layer. Sprinkle with remaining nuts.

Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before inverting onto a wire rack to cool completely. **Yield:** 10 servings.

Chocolate Cookie Torte

This recipe has been used many times in our family for get-togethers. It's easy to make and beautiful.
—Irene Bigler, New Cumberland, Pennsylvania

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 egg yolk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
Additional sugar
FROSTING:
2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup half-and-half cream
2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
Chocolate sprinkles

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in the egg, yolk and vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Form into a long log; cut into eight equal pieces. Shape each into a ball; wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

Roll balls in additional sugar; place between two sheets of waxed paper. Roll each into a 6-in. circle. Remove top sheet of waxed paper; flip the circles onto ungreased baking sheets. Remove waxed paper; prick dough with a fork.

Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Carefully loosen cookies and cool on paper towels. For frosting, melt chocolate chips with half-and-half in a heavy saucepan, stirring occasionally. Cool. Combine whipped cream and vanilla; fold into chocolate mixture. Layer cookies, spreading 1/4 cup frosting between each layer. Spread remaining frosting over sides and top. Decorate with chocolate sprinkles. Refrigerate overnight. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Raspberry Meringue Pie

We have raspberry bushes, so I'm always looking for recipes using this delicious fruit. This is one of our favorites. —Mrs. Anton Sohrwiede, McGraw, New York

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons cold butter
1 egg, beaten
2 tablespoons milk
TOPPING:
2 egg whites
1/2 cup sugar
2 cups unsweetened raspberries

In a bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt; cut in butter. Combine egg and milk; stir into flour mixture (dough will be sticky). Press into the bottom and up the sides of a greased 9-in. pie plate; set aside.

In a mixing bowl, beat egg whites on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, until stiff peaks form. Fold in raspberries. Spoon over the crust. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until browned. Cool on a wire rack. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Ice Cream Sundae Dessert

When I was growing up, my siblings and I couldn't wait to dig into this tempting ice cream dessert. It's cool and smooth with a ribbon of fudge inside. Now whenever I make it for my family, I think of Mom.
—Anne Heinonen, Howell, Michigan

2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 package (12 ounces) vanilla wafers, crushed
1/2 cup butter, melted
2 quarts vanilla ice cream *or* flavor of your choice, softened

In a saucepan over medium heat, melt chocolate chips with milk and salt; cook and stir until thickened, about 25 minutes. Remove from the heat; set aside. Combine wafer crumbs and butter; set aside 1 cup. Press remaining crumbs into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. pan. Chill for 10-15 minutes.

Pour chocolate over the crumbs. Cover and freeze for 20-25 minutes or until firm. Spread the ice cream over chocolate. Sprinkle with reserved crumbs. Freeze at least 2 hours before serving. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Homemade Chocolate Cake

A rich chocolate frosting is the flavorful finishing touch to this moist from-scratch cake that's mixed in one bowl. It always turns out great and is quickly gobbled up by friends and family.

—Cindy Miller
Riverside, Iowa

Fruity Bundt Cake

I like this white fruitcake for its color and texture. The festive red and green candied cherries add just the right amount of holiday cheer.

—Blanche Whytsell
Arnoldsburg, West Virginia

Chocolate Cream Dessert

Since the 1960s, whenever I've asked my family what dessert I should fix, this is what they've requested. It has a light texture and also a tempting pale chocolate color and is not overly sweet. It's a delightful treat.

—Laurine Muhle
Lake Park, Minnesota

Cranberry Graham Squares

This pretty layered dessert is refreshingly creamy. And because you can make it the night before, it can really help you get a jump on the holiday dinner.

—H. Stevenson
Davidson, Saskatchewan

Chocolate Cream Dessert

3 cups crushed vanilla wafers
2/3 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
FILLING:
1 milk chocolate candy bar (7 ounces), plain or with almonds, broken into pieces
1 package (10 ounces) large marshmallows
1 cup milk
2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
Sliced almonds, toasted, optional

In a bowl, combine wafer crumbs, butter, sugar and cinnamon; mix well. Set aside 1/3 cup for topping. Press remaining crumb mixture into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. pan; refrigerate until firm.

In a saucepan, heat the candy bar, marshmallows and milk over medium-low heat until chocolate and marshmallows are melted, stirring often. Remove from the heat; cool to room temperature.

Fold in whipped cream and vanilla; pour over crust. Chill for 3-4 hours. Sprinkle with reserved crumb mixture and almonds if desired. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cranberry Graham Squares

2 cups graham cracker crumbs
3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, *divided*
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon butter, melted, *divided*
1 package (3 ounces) cook-and-serve vanilla pudding mix
1-1/2 cups cranberries
3/4 cup raisins
3/4 cup water
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1-1/2 teaspoons cold water
1 envelope whipped topping mix

In a bowl, combine cracker crumbs, 2 tablespoons sugar, salt and 1/2 cup butter; reserve 1/2 cup. Press the remaining crumbs into an ungreased 9-in. square baking pan. Chill. Meanwhile, cook pudding according to package directions; cool for 5 minutes. Spread over crust. Chill.

In a saucepan over medium heat, cook cranberries, raisins and water until berries pop, about 5-10 minutes. Stir in remaining sugar. Combine cornstarch and cold water until smooth; add to the cranberry mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in remaining butter. Cool to room temperature. Spread over pudding layer.

Prepare whipped topping according to package directions; spread over cranberry layer. Sprinkle with reserved crumbs. Chill for at least 6 hours. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 9 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Homemade Chocolate Cake

3 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups sugar
1/3 cup baking cocoa
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups water
3/4 cup vegetable oil
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 teaspoons vinegar
CHOCOLATE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup butter, softened
2 cups confectioners' sugar
1/3 cup baking cocoa
Dash salt
3 tablespoons milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl, combine the first five ingredients. Add the water, oil, vanilla and vinegar; mix well (batter will be thin). Pour into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan.

Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool completely.

For frosting, in a mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese and butter. Add the confectioners' sugar, cocoa, salt, milk and vanilla; mix well. Spread over the cake. **Yield:** 12-15 servings.

Editor's Note: This recipe contains no egg.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Fruity Bundt Cake

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1 cup butter, softened
1-1/2 cups sugar
4 eggs
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2-1/4 cups cake flour, *divided*
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup chopped pecans
1-1/2 cups chopped red and green candied cherries
GLAZE:
1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar
3 to 4 tablespoons milk
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
Pinch salt
Additional candied cherries

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, butter and sugar until fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla. Combine 2 cups flour and baking powder; gradually beat into batter. Combine pecans, cherries and remaining flour; fold into batter. Pour into a greased and floured 10-in. fluted tube pan.

Bake at 325° for 1 hour or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes; remove to a wire rack to cool completely. Combine confectioners' sugar, milk, vanilla and salt; drizzle over cake. Garnish with cherries. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

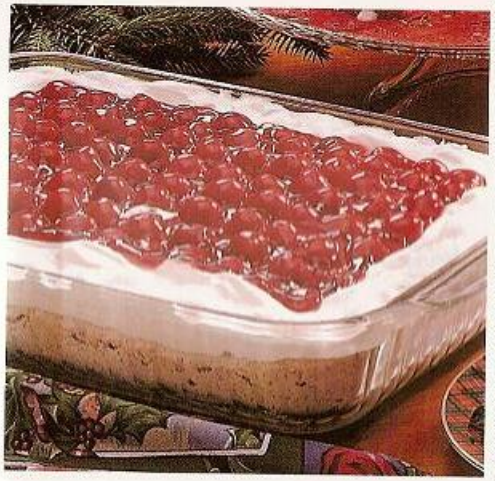
Cherry

Cranberry

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cherry Pecan Torte

Soda crackers are the "secret ingredient" in this meringue. It's a great change of pace for dessert.
Dolores Lueken
Ferdinand, Indiana



Cranberry Shiver

Cool and refreshing, this pretty dessert is delightfully sweet-tart and makes the perfect ending for a bountiful holiday meal. You can make it ahead and keep it in the freezer, so there will be one less thing to do before serving.
—Audrey Thibodeau
Mesa, Arizona

Minty Cocoa Mousse

Junior Mints give the refreshing mint taste to this scrumptious smooth-as-silk mousse. It's one of my best desserts because it's a snap to prepare, yet the flavor is beyond compare.
—Melissa Tarbox
Allen, Texas

Spiced Apple Upside-Down Cake

I like unusual desserts like this one. Judging from the condition of my recipe card, this must be very good—a messy, well-worn card shows I've made this cake countless times.
—Mavis Diment
Marcus, Iowa

Minty Cocoa Mousse

- 2 tablespoons baking cocoa
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 cup Junior Mints
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed, *divided*
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Fresh mint and additional whipped topping, optional

In a saucepan, combine cocoa and milk until smooth. Add mints and butter; cook and stir over low heat until smooth. Cool for 15 minutes. Stir in 1 cup whipped topping and vanilla. Fold in the remaining whipped topping. Spoon into dessert dishes. Refrigerate until serving. Garnish with mint and whipped topping if desired. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Spiced Apple Upside-Down Cake

- 1 jar (14 ounces) spiced apple rings
- 6 tablespoons butter, softened, *divided*
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- Whipped cream, optional

Drain the apple rings, reserving 1 tablespoon syrup; set apple rings aside. Melt 2 tablespoons butter; add brown sugar and reserved syrup. Spread evenly in a greased 8-in. round baking pan; sprinkle with almonds. Top with apple rings; set aside.

In a mixing bowl, beat egg, milk, vanilla and remaining butter. Combine flour, sugar and baking powder; add to egg mixture and mix well. Spoon over apple rings.

Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Let stand for 5 minutes. Run a knife around the edge of pan; invert cake onto a serving plate. Cool. Serve with whipped cream if desired. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cherry Pecan Torte

- 6 egg whites
- 1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups saltine crumbs
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
- 1 can (21 ounces) cherry pie filling

In a mixing bowl, beat egg whites until foamy. Beat in cream of tartar. Gradually add the sugar, beating on high until stiff peaks form. Fold in cracker crumbs, pecans and vanilla. Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan.

Bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Cool completely. Spread whipped cream over top. Spoon pie filling over cream. Chill for at least 1 hour. **Yield:** 12-15 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cranberry Shiver

- 1 package (12 ounces) fresh *or* frozen cranberries
- 3 cups water, *divided*
- 1-3/4 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel

In a saucepan, bring cranberries and 2 cups of water to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 5 minutes. Press through a strainer to remove skins; discard skins. To the juice, add sugar, lemon juice, orange peel and remaining water; mix well. Pour into an 8-in. square pan.

Cover and freeze until ice begins to form around the edges of the pan, about 1-1/2 hours; stir. Freeze until mushy, about 30 minutes. Spoon into a freezer container; cover and freeze. Remove from the freezer 20 minutes before serving. **Yield:** 10 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cherry

Cranberry

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cherry Cream Torte

When you set this gorgeous dessert on the table, your guests will sing your praises. You're the only one who has to know how simple it is to prepare.
—Mary Anne McWhirter
Pearland, Texas

(Also pictured on the cover)

Cranberry Cherry Pie

Guests won't know how quickly you made this delicious sweet-tart pie. It calls for just four filling ingredients including convenient cherry pie filling and cranberries.
—Marilyn Williams
Matthews, North Carolina

Peppermint Stick Pie

This refreshing ice cream pie helps celebrate the Yuletide season. I appreciate its no-bake convenience. —Mildred Peachey
Wooster, Ohio

Cream Cheese Pound Cake

I got this recipe from a woman who came to my rummage sale. We got to talking about zucchini—she didn't know what it could be used for. So I sent her some of my favorite recipes. In return, she mailed me the recipe for this cake.
—Mrs. Michael Ewanek
Hastings, Pennsylvania

Peppermint Stick Pie

4-1/2 cups crisp rice cereal
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips, melted
2 quarts peppermint stick ice cream, softened
Chocolate syrup *or* chocolate fudge topping
Crushed peppermint candies

Combine cereal and chocolate; mix well. Press onto the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 10-in. pie plate. Freeze for 5 minutes. Spoon ice cream into the crust. Freeze until serving. Garnish with chocolate syrup and peppermint candies. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Editor's Note: Pie may be made ahead and frozen. Remove from freezer 15 minutes before serving.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cream Cheese Pound Cake

1-1/2 cups butter, softened
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
2-1/3 cups sugar
6 eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a large mixing bowl, beat butter and cream cheese. Gradually add sugar, beating until light and fluffy, about 5-7 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Gradually add flour, beating just until blended. Stir in vanilla. Pour into a greased and floured 10-in. tube pan.

Bake at 300° for 1-1/2 hours or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan 15 minutes before removing to a wire rack. Cool completely. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cherry Cream Torte

2 packages (3 ounces *each*) ladyfingers
2 tablespoons white grape *or* apple juice
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
2/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon almond extract, *divided*
2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
1 can (21 ounces) cherry pie filling
Toasted sliced almonds, mint leaves and additional whipped cream

Split ladyfingers lengthwise; brush with juice. Place a layer of ladyfingers around the sides and on the bottom of a lightly greased 9-in. springform pan. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth; add sugar and 1/2 teaspoon extract. Beat on medium for 1 minute. Fold in whipped cream. Spread half over crust.

Arrange remaining ladyfingers in a spoke-like fashion. Spread evenly with the remaining cream cheese mixture. Cover and chill overnight.

Combine the pie filling and remaining extract; spread over the cream cheese layer. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. To serve, remove sides of pan. Garnish with almonds, mint leaves and whipped cream. **Yield:** 16-18 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cranberry Cherry Pie

3/4 cup sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 can (21 ounces) cherry pie filling
2 cups cranberries
Pastry for double-crust pie (9 inches)
Milk and additional sugar

In a bowl, combine sugar and cornstarch. Stir in pie filling and cranberries. Line a 9-in. pie plate with bottom pastry; trim to 1 in. beyond edge of plate.

Pour filling into crust. Roll out remaining pastry to fit top of pie. Cut slits in pastry or cut out stars with a star-shaped cookie cutter. Place pastry over filling; trim, seal and flute edges. Arrange star cutouts on pastry. Brush with milk and sprinkle with sugar. Cover edges loosely with foil.

Bake at 375° for 55-60 minutes or until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly. Cool on a wire rack. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Swedish Creme

This thick creamy dessert is a great finale to a special meal. It has just a hint of almond flavor, and the bright-red berries on top look spectacular.

—Linda Nilsen
Anoka, Minnesota

Pumpkin Chiffon Pie

My family loves this variation on the traditional pumpkin pie. Try one slice of this delicious dessert, and you'll see why!

—Karen Grimes
Stephens City, Virginia

Cran-Orange Delight

This is a recipe I put together from a few of our favorite fruits. My family really likes this moist and refreshing cake, and it's rather easy to make.

—Joyce Gee
Blytheville, Arkansas

Raspberry Almond Torte

This delicious torte is a longtime family tradition for the holidays. It's one of my sister's favorites, and she's a professional pastry chef.

—Dana Pratt
De Land, Illinois

Cran-Orange Delight

1 package (18-1/4 ounces) yellow cake mix
1-1/3 cups orange juice
1/3 cup vegetable oil
3 eggs
1 teaspoon rum flavoring, optional
FROSTING:
1 carton (12 ounces) cranberry-orange sauce
1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix
2/3 cup orange juice
1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
Sliced almonds, optional

In a mixing bowl, beat the first five ingredients until smooth. Pour into two greased and floured 9-in. cake pans.

Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pans for 15 minutes before removing to a wire rack.

For frosting, combine cranberry-orange sauce, pudding mix and orange juice in a mixing bowl. Fold in whipped topping. Split cooled cakes in half horizontally. Spread frosting between layers and over the top and sides of cake. Garnish with almonds if desired. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 10-14 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Raspberry Almond Torte

1-1/3 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar, *divided*
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup cold butter
3 eggs
1/2 cup raspberry jam, *divided*
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup ground almonds
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
2 to 2-1/2 teaspoons lemon juice

In a mixing bowl, combine flour, 1/3 cup sugar and baking powder. Cut in cold butter until crumbly. Beat 1 egg; add to mixing bowl and stir until all flour is moistened.

Press dough evenly onto bottom and up the sides of a 9-in. x 1-1/2-in. tart pan with removable bottom. Spread 1/4 cup of jam over dough. Cover with plastic wrap; chill.

Meanwhile, cream butter and sugar; stir in almonds and extract. Add remaining eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition; spoon over jam in tart pan. Bake at 350° for 50 minutes; cool in pan. Carefully remove sides from pan; spread remaining jam on top. Combine confectioners' sugar and lemon juice; drizzle over top. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Swedish Creme

2 cups heavy whipping cream
1 cup plus 2 teaspoons sugar, *divided*
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract
2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream
1 cup fresh *or* frozen raspberries, crushed

In a saucepan, combine cream and 1 cup sugar. Cook and stir constantly over low heat until thermometer reads 160° and steam rises from pan (do not boil). Stir in gelatin until dissolved; add extracts. Cool for 10 minutes.

Whisk in sour cream. Pour into eight dessert glasses or small bowls; chill at least 1 hour. Before serving, combine raspberries and remaining sugar; spoon over each serving. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Pumpkin Chiffon Pie

1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1 tablespoon sugar
1-1/2 cups whipped topping
1 graham cracker crust (9 inches)
1 cup cold milk
2 packages (3.4 ounces *each*) instant vanilla pudding mix
1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
Chopped nuts and additional whipped topping, optional

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add whipped topping and mix well. Spread into crust. In another bowl, beat milk and pudding mixes on low speed until combined; beat on high for 2 minutes. Let stand 3 minutes. Stir in pumpkin and spices; mix well. Spread over cream cheese layer. Chill. Garnish with nuts and whipped topping if desired. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

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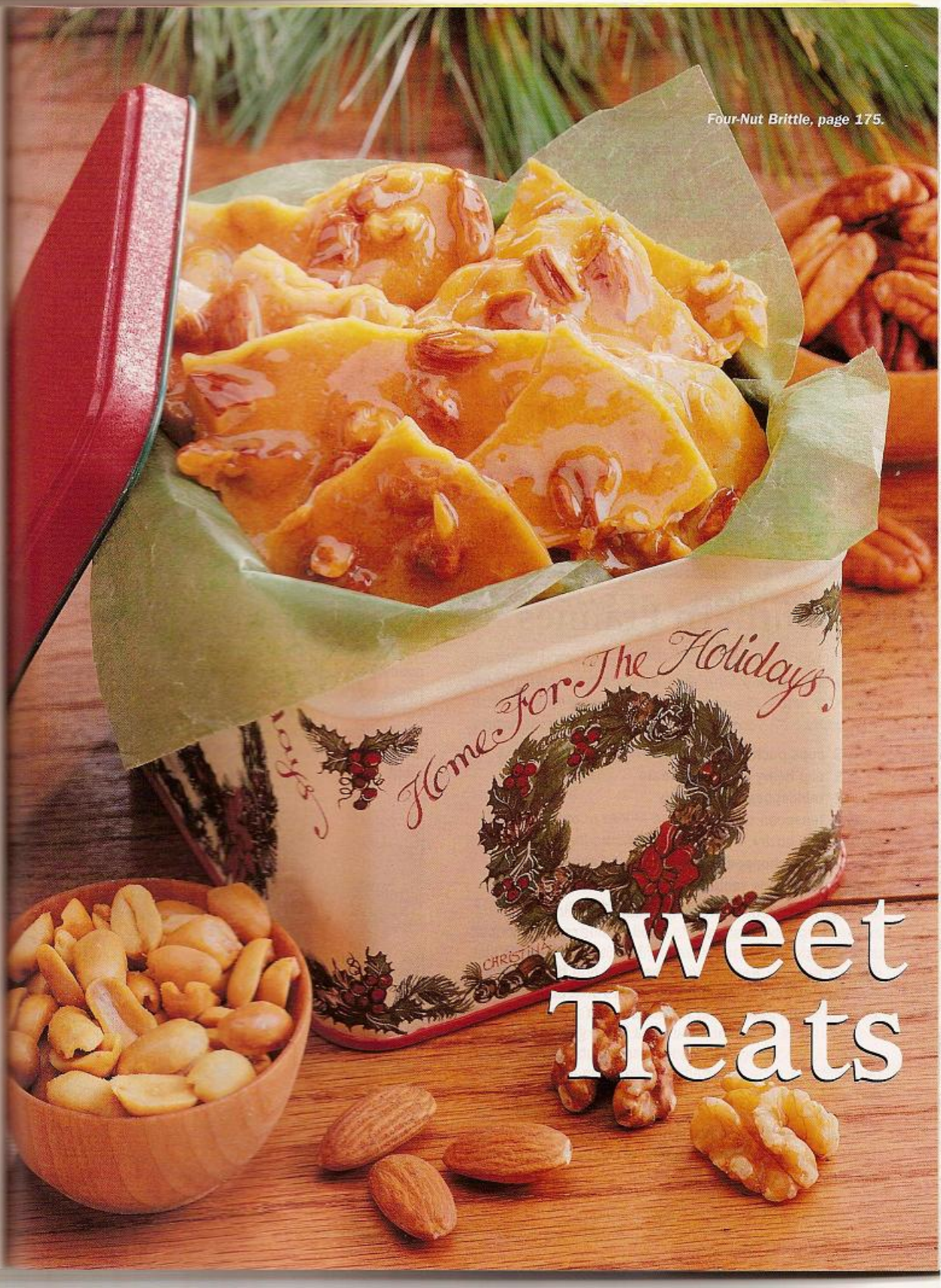


Sweet Treats

Southern Pralines

(Pictured above)

This recipe is truly Southern, and it's been a family favorite for years. I've packed many a Christmas tin with this candy. —*Bernice Eberhart, Fort Payne, Alabama*

- **3 cups packed brown sugar**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **2 tablespoons corn syrup**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 cup butter**
- **2 cups chopped pecans**
- **1-1/4 teaspoons vanilla extract**

In a large heavy saucepan over medium heat, bring brown sugar, cream, corn syrup and salt to a boil, stirring constantly. Cook until a candy thermometer reads 234° (soft-ball stage), stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat; add butter (do not stir). Cool until candy thermometer reads 150°, about 35 minutes. Stir in the pecans and vanilla. Stir with a wooden spoon until candy just begins to thicken but is still glossy, about 5-7 minutes. Quickly drop by heaping teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper; spread to form 2-in. patties. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 3-4 dozen.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

Pink Peppermint Cookies

(Pictured below)

The combination of cool peppermint and chocolate makes these treats nearly irresistible. Decorate them with designs such as stars, snowflakes or Christmas trees. —*Renee Schwebach, Dumont, Minnesota*

- **1 cup butter, softened, *divided***
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **10 to 12 drops red food coloring**
- **3/4 teaspoon peppermint extract**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour, *divided***
- **1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1 tablespoon chocolate syrup**

In a mixing bowl, cream 3/4 cup butter and the sugar. Beat in egg, food coloring and peppermint extract. Combine 1-3/4 cups flour, baking soda, cream of tartar and salt; add to creamed mixture. Shape into a ball. Cover and chill for 1-2 hours.

Meanwhile, in a bowl, combine chocolate syrup and remaining butter and flour; stir until well blended. Spoon into a pastry bag with a small round tip. Shape dough into 3/4-in. balls. Place on ungreased baking sheets; flatten into 1-1/2-in. circles. Pipe chocolate mixture on top of cookies in simple holiday designs. Bake at 375° for 5-7 minutes. Cool on wire racks. **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Spice Cookies with Pumpkin Dip

(Pictured above)

My husband and two kids eat the first dozen of these cookies, warm from the oven, before the next baking pan is even done. A co-worker gave me the recipe for the pumpkin dip, which everyone loves with the cookies.
—Kelly McNeal, Derby, Kansas

1-1/2 cups butter, softened
2 cups sugar
2 eggs
1/2 cup molasses
4 cups all-purpose flour
4 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon salt
Additional sugar
PUMPKIN DIP:
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
2 cups canned pumpkin pie mix
2 cups confectioners' sugar
1/2 to 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add molasses; mix well. Combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, cloves and salt; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Refrigerate overnight.

Shape into 1/2-in. balls; roll in sugar. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 6 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to a wire rack.

For dip, beat cream cheese in a mixing bowl until smooth. Add pumpkin pie mix; beat well. Add sugar, cinnamon and ginger; beat until smooth. Serve with cookies. Store leftover dip in the refrigerator. **Yield:** about 20 dozen (3 cups dip).

Harvest Sugar Cookies

Rich buttery cookies like these never last long at a party or potluck. I got this recipe from a friend in Texas years ago and have used it many times since. You can cut these cookies into pumpkins or leaves or whatever shape you'd like. *—Lynn Burgess, Rolla, Missouri*

3/4 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
Frosting* *or* additional sugar, optional

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and vanilla; beat until light and fluffy. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until firm.

On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with cookie cutters of your choice. Using a floured spatula, place cookies on greased baking sheets. Sprinkle with sugar if desired (or frost baked cookies after they have cooled).

Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks. **Yield:** 6-7 dozen (2-1/2-inch cookies).

***Editor's Note:** For a richer color, tint frosting with food coloring paste available at kitchen and cake decorating supply stores.

Clockwise from top right: Cutout Christmas Cookies, Granny's Spice Cookies and Date Swirls.

Cutout Christmas Cookies

(Pictured at left)

Ground cinnamon and a hint of ground cloves and ginger give these cutouts great flavor. —Carolyn Moseley Dayton, Ohio

- **1 cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- **3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cloves**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **1 egg white, beaten**
- **Colored decorating sugars**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and vanilla. Combine flour, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, cloves and nutmeg; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Chill for at least 1 hour. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough, a portion at a time, to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut into desired shapes. Place on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Carefully brush with egg white; sprinkle with colored sugar. Return to the oven for 3-5 minutes or until lightly browned. **Yield:** about 6 dozen (2-inch cookies).

Granny's Spice Cookies

(Pictured at left)

No one can compete with Granny's cooking, but these spice cookies come pretty close! —Valerie Hudson Mason City, Iowa

- **1 cup butter, softened**
- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **1 egg, lightly beaten**
- **2 tablespoons light corn syrup**
- **2 tablespoons grated orange peel**
- **1 tablespoon cold water**
- **3-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 teaspoons baking soda**
- **2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- **1 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cloves**
- **Red-hot candies, nonpareils *and/or* sprinkles**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add egg, corn syrup, orange peel and cold water. Combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger and cloves; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Chill for at least 1 hour. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough, a portion at a time, to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut into desired shapes. Place on greased baking sheets. Decorate as desired. Bake at 375° for 6-8 minutes or until lightly browned. **Yield:** about 4 dozen (3-inch cookies).

Date Swirls

(Pictured at left)

The ribbon of chopped dates and nuts swirled into these tasty cookies. —Donna Grace, Clancy, Montana

FILLING:

- **2 cups chopped dates**
- **1 cup water**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 cup chopped nuts**
- **2 teaspoons lemon juice**

DOUGH:

- **1 cup butter**
- **1 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **3 eggs**
- **1 teaspoon lemon extract**
- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **3/4 teaspoon baking soda**

In a saucepan, combine filling ingredients. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until mixture becomes stiff, about 15-20 minutes. Chill. For dough, cream butter and sugars in a mixing bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add extract. Combine flour, salt and baking soda; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Chill for at least 1 hour.

On a lightly floured surface, roll out half of the dough to a 12-in. x 9-in. rectangle, about 1/4-in. thick. Spread with half of filling. Roll up, starting with long end. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. Wrap with plastic wrap; chill overnight. Cut rolls into 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on wire racks. **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Orange Chocolate Meltaways

(Pictured below)

The combination of chocolate and orange makes these some of the best truffles I've ever had. As holiday gifts, they're showstoppers. —*Lori Kostecki*
Wausau, Wisconsin

1 package (11-1/2 ounces) milk chocolate chips
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
3/4 cup heavy whipping cream
1 teaspoon grated orange peel
2-1/2 teaspoons orange extract
1-1/2 cups finely chopped toasted pecans
COATING:
1 cup (6 ounces) milk chocolate chips
2 tablespoons shortening

Place chocolate chips in a mixing bowl; set aside. In a saucepan, bring cream and orange peel to a gentle boil; immediately pour over chips. Let stand for 1 minute; whisk until smooth. Add the extract. Cover and chill for 35 minutes or until mixture begins to thicken. Beat for 10-15 seconds or just until mixture lightens in color (do not overbeat).

Spoon rounded teaspoonfuls onto waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Cover and chill for 5 minutes. Gently shape into balls; roll half in pecans. In a microwave or double boiler, melt chocolate and shortening; stir until smooth. Dip remaining balls in chocolate. Place on waxed paper to harden. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 6 dozen.

Jewel Nut Bars

(Pictured above)

These colorful bars, with the eye-catching appeal of candied cherries and the crunchy goodness of mixed nuts, are certain to become a holiday standby year after year. I get lots of compliments on the rich, chewy crust and the combination of sweet and salty flavors. —*Joyce Fitt, Listowel, Ontario*

1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2/3 cup packed brown sugar, *divided*
3/4 cup cold butter
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon salt
1-1/2 cups salted mixed nuts
1-1/2 cups halved green and red candied cherries
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips

In a bowl, combine flour and 1/3 cup brown sugar; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Press into a lightly greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, beat egg. Add salt and remaining brown sugar. Stir in the nuts, cherries and chocolate chips. Spoon evenly over crust. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into bars. **Yield:** 3 dozen.

Surprise Meringues

(Pictured below)

These crisp, delicate cookies are light as a feather. Mini chocolate chips and chopped nuts are a delightful and yummy surprise in every bite. This fun cookie is a fitting finale to a big meal. —Gloria Grant
Sterling, Illinois

- **3 egg whites**
- **1/8 teaspoon cream of tartar**
- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **1/8 teaspoon salt**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1 cup (6 ounces) miniature semisweet chocolate chips**
- **1/4 cup chopped pecans *or* walnuts**

In a mixing bowl, beat egg whites and cream of tartar until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar, salt and vanilla, beating until stiff peaks form and sugar is dissolved, about 5-8 minutes. Fold in the chocolate chips and nuts.

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 300° for 30 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on baking sheets. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Candy Bar Fudge

(Pictured above)

I've made this chewy and chocolaty fudge many times. Packed with nuts and caramel, it's like a candy bar. Everyone who tries it loves it. —Lois Zigarac
Rochester Hills, Michigan

- **1/2 cup butter**
- **1/3 cup baking cocoa**
- **1/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1/4 cup milk**
- **3-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **30 caramels**
- **1 tablespoon water**
- **2 cups salted peanuts**
- **1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- **1/2 cup milk chocolate chips**

In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the butter, cocoa, brown sugar and milk. Microwave on high until mixture boils, about 3 minutes. Stir in confectioners' sugar and vanilla. Pour into a greased 8-in. square baking pan.

In another microwave-safe bowl, heat caramels and water on high for 2 minutes or until melted. Stir in peanuts; spread over chocolate layer. Microwave chocolate chips on high for 1 minute or until melted; spread over caramel layer. Chill until firm. **Yield:** 2-3/4 pounds.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 700-watt microwave with Hershey caramels.

Cashew Sandwich Cookies

(Pictured below)

If your family and friends enjoy rich-tasting confections, these treats are bound to be a hit at holiday gatherings! Filled with chocolate and cashews, the sandwich cookies have melt-in-your-mouth appeal.

—Melissa Boder, Salem, Virginia

1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup sugar
2 egg yolks
1/2 cup sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon lemon juice
3 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup butter
1 can (10 ounces) salted cashews, finely chopped
Confectioners' sugar, optional

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add egg yolks, sour cream, vanilla and lemon juice; mix well. Add flour; mix well. Cover and chill for at least 2 hours or until easy to handle. On a floured surface, roll out dough to 1/8-in. thickness. Cut with a 2-in. round cookie cutter. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 11-13 minutes or until edges

are lightly browned. Cool on wire racks.

For filling, melt chocolate chips and butter in a small saucepan. Remove from the heat; stir in cashews. Spread on the bottom of half of the cookies; top each with another cookie. Dust tops with confectioners' sugar if desired. **Yield:** about 4 dozen.

Chewy Date Nut Bars

(Pictured above)

You'll need just six ingredients to bake up these chewy bars chock-full of walnuts and dates.

—Linda Hutmacher, Teutopolis, Illinois

1 package (18-1/4 ounces) yellow cake mix
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
3/4 cup butter, melted
2 eggs
2 cups chopped dates
2 cups chopped walnuts

In a mixing bowl, combine cake mix and brown sugar. Add butter and eggs; beat on medium speed for 2 minutes. Combine dates and walnuts; stir into batter (the batter will be stiff). Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan.

Bake at 350° for 35-45 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Run a knife around sides of pan to loosen; cool completely before cutting. **Yield:** 3 dozen.

Old-Fashioned Gingersnaps

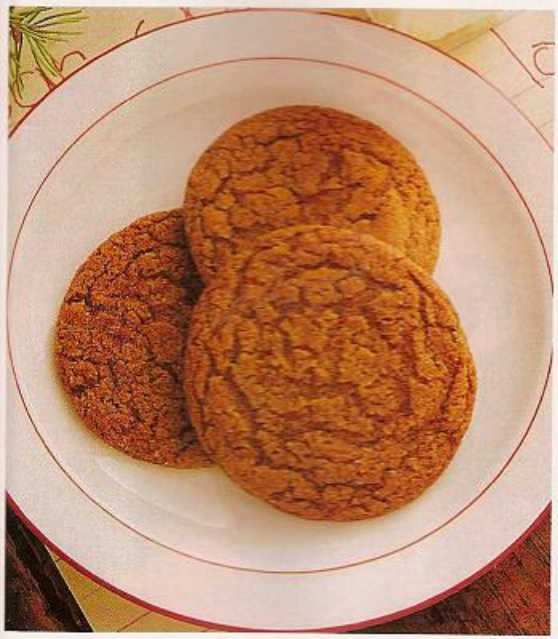
(Pictured below)

I discovered this recipe many years ago, and it's been a favorite among our family and friends since. Who doesn't like cookies during the holidays?

—Francis Stoops, Stoneboro, Pennsylvania

- **3/4 cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **1/4 cup molasses**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 teaspoons baking soda**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1 teaspoon ground cloves**
- **1 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **Additional sugar**

In a mixing bowl, cream the butter and sugar. Add egg and molasses; beat well. Sift together dry ingredients; gradually add to creamed mixture. Mix well. Chill the dough. Roll into 1-1/4-in. balls and dip into sugar. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for about 10 minutes or until set and surface cracks. Cool on wire racks. **Yield:** about 4 dozen.



Dairy State Fudge

(Pictured above)

I grew up on a dairy farm in Wisconsin, so it's only natural I have a lot of recipes that use dairy ingredients. I make this candy nearly every Christmas. You'll find it's hard to eat just one piece. *—Jan Vande Slunt, Waupun, Wisconsin*

- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **2 tablespoons butter**
- **2 pounds white candy coating, broken into small pieces**
- **1 to 1-1/2 cups chopped pecans, walnuts *or* hickory nuts**

Line a 9-in. square baking pan with foil; butter the foil and set aside. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy; set aside.

In the top of a double boiler, melt butter. Add candy coating; heat and stir until melted and smooth. Pour over the cream cheese; beat until smooth and glossy, about 7-10 minutes. Stir in nuts. Pour into prepared pan. Cool. Remove from pan and cut into 1-in. pieces. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 64 pieces.

Chocolate Malted Cookies

(Pictured below)

These cookies are the next best thing to a good old-fashioned malted milk. With malted milk powder, chocolate syrup plus chocolate chips and chunks, these are the best cookies I've ever tasted...and with six kids, I've made a lot of cookies over the years.

—Teri Rasey-Bolf, Cadillac, Michigan

- **1 cup butter-flavored shortening**
- **1-1/4 cups packed brown sugar**
- **1/2 cup malted milk powder**
- **2 tablespoons chocolate syrup**
- **1 tablespoon vanilla extract**
- **1 egg**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1-1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chunks**
- **1 cup (6 ounces) milk chocolate chips**

In a mixing bowl, cream shortening and brown sugar. Add malted milk powder, chocolate syrup and vanilla; beat for 2 minutes. Add egg.

Combine flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Stir in chocolate chunks and chips. Shape into 2-in. balls; place 3 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.

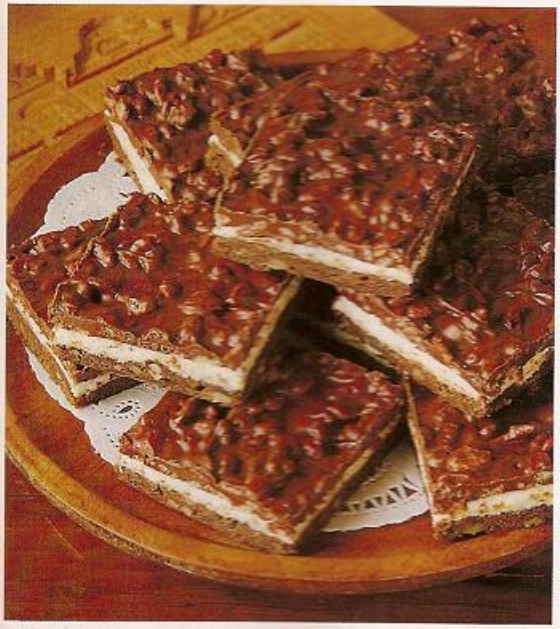
Bake at 375° for 12-14 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to a wire rack. **Yield:** about 1-1/2 dozen.

Deluxe Chocolate Marshmallow Bars

(Pictured at right)

I'd have to say that I've been asked to share this chocolaty layered bar recipe more than any other in my collection. It's a longtime favorite of our three daughters. I can't count how many times we've all made these!

—Esther Shank, Harrisonburg, Virginia



- **3/4 cup butter**
- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **3 eggs**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1-1/3 cups all-purpose flour**
- **3 tablespoons baking cocoa**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 cup chopped nuts, optional**
- **4 cups miniature marshmallows**

TOPPING:

- **1-1/3 cups chocolate chips**
- **1 cup peanut butter**
- **3 tablespoons butter**
- **2 cups crisp rice cereal**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and vanilla; beat until fluffy. Combine flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture. Stir in nuts if desired. Spread in a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. pan.

Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes. Sprinkle marshmallows evenly over cake; return to oven for 2-3 minutes. Using a knife dipped in water, spread the melted marshmallows evenly over cake. Cool.

For topping, combine chocolate chips, peanut butter and butter in a small saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until melted and well blended. Remove from heat; stir in cereal. Immediately spread over bars. Chill. **Yield:** about 3 dozen.

Rolled Oat Cookies

(Pictured below)

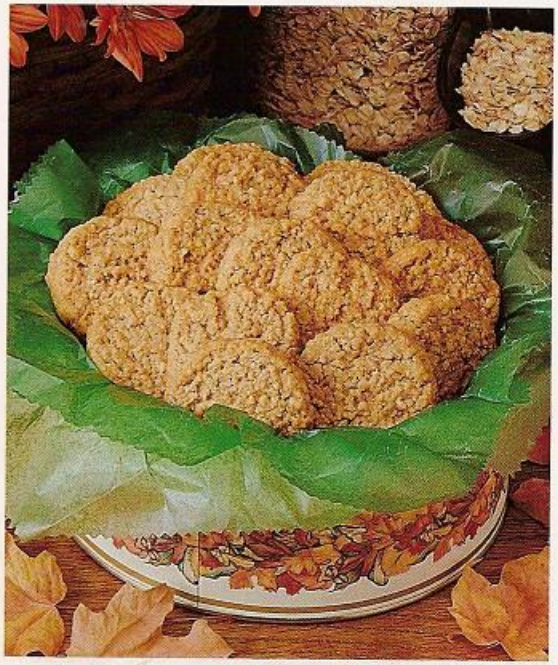
I like to keep some of this dough ready in the freezer since it's so handy to slice, bake and serve at a moment's notice. These wholesome cookies are super with a cup of coffee—in fact, we occasionally grab a few for breakfast when we're in a hurry. —*Kathi Peters*
Chilliwack, British Columbia

- **1 cup butter**
- **1 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1/4 cup water**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **3 cups quick-cooking oats**
- **1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon baking soda**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add water and vanilla; mix well. Combine dry ingredients; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Chill for 30 minutes.

Shape into two 1-1/2-in. rolls; wrap tightly in waxed paper. Chill for 2 hours or until firm. Cut into 1/2-in. slices and place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets.

Bake at 375° for 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** about 3-1/2 dozen.



Buttersweets

(Pictured above)

With cream cheese, cherries and a sweet topping, this recipe turns chocolate chip cookies into something special. These are pretty to look at and taste like a combination of cookie and candy. —LeeAnn McCue
West Springfield, Massachusetts

- **1 tube (18 ounces) refrigerated chocolate chip cookie dough**
- **1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **3/4 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1/4 cup chopped maraschino cherries**
- **1 drop red food coloring, optional**
- **1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- **2 tablespoons butter**

With a sharp knife, cut cookie dough into eight equal slices. Cut each slice into quarters; roll into balls. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Immediately make a deep impression in the center of each cookie using the back of a small melon baller or small spoon. Cool for 5 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool completely.

Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, cream the cream cheese and sugar. Pat cherries dry with paper towels. Stir cherries and food coloring if desired into creamed mixture. Place a teaspoonful of filling into the center of each cookie. In a heavy saucepan over low heat, melt chocolate chips and butter, stirring occasionally. Drizzle over cookies. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 32 cookies.

Aunt Rose's Fantastic Butter Toffee

(Pictured below)

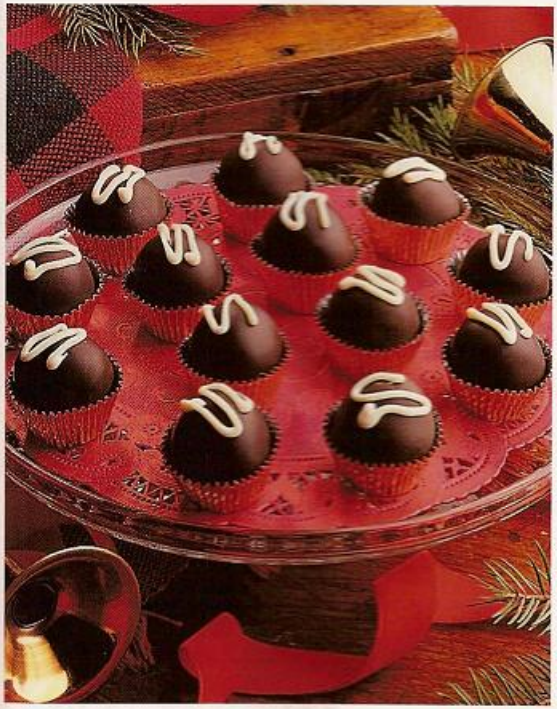
I love good old-fashioned home cooking! This toffee comes from the heart. It's been a favorite in my family since I was a little girl! —Rosie Kimberlin
Los Angeles, California

- **2 cups whole unblanched almonds (about 10 ounces)**
- **11 ounces milk chocolate**
- **1 cup butter**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **3 tablespoons water**

Spread almonds in an ungreased baking pan and toast in 350° oven for about 10 minutes, shaking pan occasionally. Cool. Finely grind chocolate in a food processor (do not overprocess). Set aside. Coarsely chop almonds in food processor. Sprinkle 1 cup over bottom of a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Sprinkle with 1 cup ground chocolate. Set aside.

In a heavy saucepan, combine butter, sugar and water; cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the mixture reaches 290° (soft-crack stage). Very quickly pour over chocolate and nuts. Sprinkle remaining chocolate over toffee; top with remaining nuts. Refrigerate and break into pieces. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** about 2 pounds.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.



Mocha Truffles

(Pictured above)

Nothing compares to the melt-in-your-mouth flavor of these truffles...or to the simplicity of the recipe. Whenever I make them for my family or friends, they're quickly devoured. No one has to know how easy they are to prepare! —*Stacy Abell, Olathe, Kansas*

2 packages (12 ounces each) semisweet chocolate chips
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
3 tablespoons instant coffee granules
2 teaspoons water
1 pound dark chocolate candy coating
White candy coating, optional

In a microwave-safe bowl or double boiler, melt chocolate chips. Add cream cheese, coffee and water; mix well. Refrigerate until firm enough to shape. Shape into 1-in. balls and place on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet. Chill for 1-2 hours or until firm.

Melt dark chocolate coating in microwave-safe bowl or double boiler. Dip balls and place on waxed paper to harden. If desired, melt white coating and drizzle over truffles. **Yield:** about 5-1/2 dozen.

Chocolate Mint Brownies

(Pictured below)

One of the best things about this recipe is the brownies get moister if you leave them in the refrigerator a day or two. The problem at our house is no one can leave them alone for that long! —*Helen Baines, Elkton, Maryland*

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 can (16 ounces) chocolate syrup
1 cup sugar

FILLING:

2 cups confectioners' sugar
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 tablespoon water
1/2 teaspoon mint extract
3 drops green food coloring

TOPPING:

1 package (10 ounces) mint chocolate chips
9 tablespoons butter

Combine the first seven ingredients in a large mixing bowl; beat at medium speed for 3 minutes. Pour batter into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes (top of brownies will still appear wet). Cool completely.

Combine filling ingredients in a medium mixing bowl; beat until creamy. Spread over cooled brownies. Refrigerate until set.

For topping, melt chocolate chips and butter over low heat in a small saucepan. Let cool for 30 minutes or until lukewarm, stirring occasionally. Spread over filling. Chill before cutting. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 5-6 dozen.

Molasses Creams

(Pictured below)

Making these treats seems to put me in a holiday mood. Maybe it's the soft centers, or perhaps the spicy aroma of ginger and cloves. Whatever the case, a few Molasses Creams and a glass of milk or cup of warm tea always hit the spot!—Virginia Krites, Cridersville, Ohio

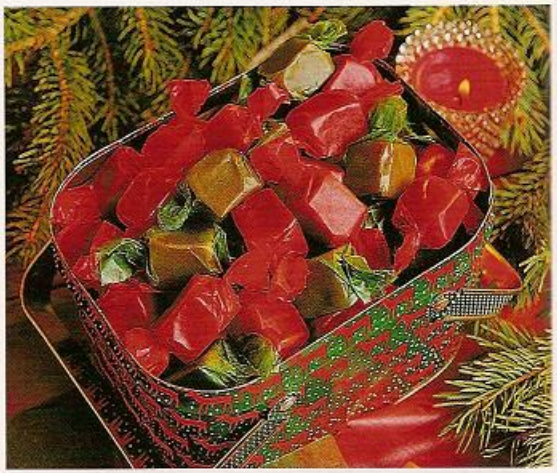
- **1-1/2 cups butter, softened**
- **2 cups sugar**
- **2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **1/2 cup molasses**
- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 teaspoons baking soda**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **3/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cloves**

FROSTING:

- **3 tablespoons butter, softened**
- **1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- **1 tablespoon vanilla extract**
- **1 to 2 tablespoons milk**

In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and molasses; mix thoroughly. Combine dry ingredients; gradually add to creamed mixture. Shape into 1-in. balls. Place on ungreased baking sheets (do not flatten).

Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until done (centers will be slightly soft). In a small mixing bowl, beat butter, sugar, vanilla and enough milk until creamy. Frost cookies while warm. **Yield:** about 8 dozen.



Easy Microwave Caramels

(Pictured above)

I usually make an extra batch of these caramels and freeze them for company or last-minute gift-giving. After only about 20 quick seconds in the microwave, the frozen caramel is soft enough to cut, wrap and pack into a candy jar. —*Darleen Worm, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin*

- **1 cup butter**
- **2-1/3 cups packed brown sugar**
- **1 cup light corn syrup**
- **1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
- **1/8 teaspoon salt**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1/2 cup chopped walnuts, optional**

In 2-qt. microwave-safe pitcher, combine butter, sugar, syrup, milk and salt. Microwave on high 3 to 4 minutes, stirring once after about 2 minutes. When butter is melted, stir well. Microwave on high for about 14 minutes or until mixture reaches 245° (firm-ball stage). No stirring is needed. Remove from microwave; stir in vanilla and walnuts.

Allow to stand for 10 minutes, stirring several times. Pour

into greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. pan (smaller 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. pan yields thicker candy as shown in photo). Refrigerate until cool. Invert the pan. Carefully tap out whole block of candy; cut into squares. Wrap in waxed paper and store in the refrigerator or freezer. **Yield:** about 2-3/4 pounds.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 700-watt microwave oven. We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

Coconut Washboards

(Pictured below)

These are my husband's favorite cookies, so I've made them a lot during the many years we've been married.
—Tommie Sue Shaw, McAlester, Oklahoma

- **1/2 cup butter, softened**
- **1/2 cup shortening**
- **2 cups packed brown sugar**
- **2 eggs**
- **1/4 cup water**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup flaked coconut**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugar for 2 minutes or until fluffy. Add eggs; mix well. Gradually add water and vanilla; mix well. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; add to the creamed mixture. Fold in coconut. Cover and refrigerate for 2-4 hours.

Shape into 1-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets; flatten with fingers into 2-1/2-in. x 1-in. oblong shapes. Press lengthwise with a floured fork. Bake at 400° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool 2 minutes before removing to a wire rack. **Yield:** about 9 dozen.

Maple Butterscotch Brownies

(Pictured above)

Generally, I'll make a double recipe of these brownies—they go so fast no matter where I take them!
—Grace Vonhold, Rochester, New York

- **1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar**
- **1/2 cup butter, melted**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons maple flavoring**
- **2 eggs**
- **1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1 cup chopped walnuts**
- **Confectioners' sugar, optional**

In a bowl, combine brown sugar, butter and maple flavoring. Beat in the eggs, one at a time. Combine flour and baking powder; add to egg mixture. Stir in walnuts. Pour into a greased 9-in. square baking pan. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes or until brownies test done. Cool. Dust with confectioners' sugar if desired. **Yield:** 16 brownies.

Holiday Hideaways

(Pictured above)

People eagerly anticipate these tasty cookies as part of our "season's eatings" each year. The surprise cherry center surrounded by a fluffy cookie makes this treat especially fun. —Marianne Blazowich, Jeannette, Pennsylvania

- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **2/3 cup butter-flavored shortening**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tablespoon milk**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **2 jars (10 ounces *each*) maraschino cherries, well drained**
- **10 ounces white candy coating, *divided***
- **4 tablespoons butter-flavored shortening, *divided***
- **8 ounces dark chocolate candy coating**
- **Finely chopped pecans**

In a mixing bowl, cream sugar and shortening. Add egg, milk and vanilla. Combine dry ingredients; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Form 2 teaspoonfuls of dough into a ball. Flatten ball and place a cherry in the center; roll dough around cherry. Repeat with remaining dough and cherries. Place balls 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until set and the edges are lightly browned. Cool 1 minute before removing to wire racks to cool completely. Grate 2 oz. white candy coating; set aside. Melt remaining white coating with 2 tablespoons shortening; melt dark coating with remaining shortening. Dip half the cookies into white coating; place on waxed paper. Sprinkle with pecans. Dip the remaining cookies in dark coating; place on waxed paper. Sprinkle with grated white coating. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator. **Yield:** about 4-1/2 dozen.

Sour Cream Drops

(Pictured below)

My mother is an excellent baker, and this is her recipe. Whether Mom makes these cookies or I do, they always disappear. —Tracy Betzler, Reston, Virginia

- **1/4 cup shortening**
- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **1/2 cup sour cream**
- **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1-1/3 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/4 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**

BURNT SUGAR FROSTING:

- **2 tablespoons butter**
- **1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**

1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 to 4 teaspoons hot water

In a mixing bowl, cream shortening and sugar. Add egg, sour cream and vanilla. Combine dry ingredients; add to the creamed mixture. Chill for at least 1 hour. Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets.

Bake at 425° for 7-8 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool. For frosting, melt butter in a small saucepan until golden brown; stir in the sugar, vanilla and enough water to achieve a spreading consistency. Frost cooled cookies. **Yield:** about 2-1/2 dozen.

Apricot Angel Brownies

(Pictured above)

To tell the truth, I'm not a "chocoholic". I enjoy fruit desserts and custards more than anything. So my brownies have neither milk nor dark chocolate—but still satisfy every sweet tooth. *—Tamara Sellman, Barrington, Illinois*

2 bars (2 ounces *each*) white baking chocolate
1/3 cup butter
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
2 eggs, beaten
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup finely chopped dried apricots
1/4 cup sliced almonds
1/4 cup flaked coconut

In a saucepan, melt chocolate and butter over low heat, stirring constantly until all of the chocolate is melted. Remove from the heat; stir in brown sugar, eggs and vanilla until blended. Set aside.

In a bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Stir in chocolate mixture. Combine apricots, almonds and coconut; stir half into batter. Pour into a greased 9-in. square baking pan. Sprinkle remaining apricot mixture on top. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Cool. **Yield:** about 2 dozen.

Pinwheel Cookies

These pretty pinwheel cookies have tempting swirly layers of orange and chocolate. I really mess up my kitchen whenever I bake a batch, but the smiles on the faces of family and friends enjoying them makes it all worthwhile. *—Paulette Morgan, Moorhead, Minnesota*

1 cup butter, softened
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1 tablespoon grated orange peel
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt

FILLING:

1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1/4 cup orange juice

In a mixing bowl, cream the butter, cream cheese and sugar. Add egg, orange peel and vanilla; mix well. Combine flour and salt; add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and chill for 4 hours or until firm.

Meanwhile, combine all filling ingredients in a small saucepan. Cook and stir over low heat until smooth; set aside to cool. On a floured surface, divide dough in half; roll each half into a 12-in. x 10-in. rectangle. Spread with filling. Carefully roll up into a tight jelly roll and wrap in waxed paper. Chill overnight.

Remove waxed paper; cut rolls into 1/4-in. slices. Place on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** about 8 dozen.

Gift-Wrapped Brownies

With bright green and red frosting "ribbon" piped on top, these chocolaty "packages" are a pretty addition to any holiday gathering. They'll make a sweet gift for everyone on your Christmas list! —Doris Roots
Big Timber, Montana

1/2 cup shortening
4 squares (1 ounce *each*) semisweet baking chocolate
3 eggs
1 cup sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract, *divided*
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup chopped nuts
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
2 cups confectioners' sugar
1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
Red and green food coloring

In a small saucepan over low heat, melt shortening and chocolate; set aside. In a mixing bowl, beat eggs, sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Add the flour, nuts, salt, baking powder and chocolate mixture; mix well. Pour into a greased 8-in. square baking pan.

Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into 2-in. x 1-in. rectangles; remove from pan.

In a bowl, combine confectioners' sugar, cream and remaining vanilla; set half aside. Spread remaining frosting over top of brownies. Tint half of the reserved frosting red and half green.

Cut a small hole in the corner of two plastic or pastry bags; fill one bag with red frosting and one with green. Insert pastry tip if desired. To decorate brownies, pipe ribbon and bows on top to look like packages or create designs of your choice. **Yield:** 2-1/2 dozen.

Nutmeg Logs

The crispy-tender texture and mildly spicy flavor of these cookies will tempt all ages. My whole family enjoys them warm right out of the oven.
—Marjorie Gegelmann, Bismarck, North Dakota

1 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup sugar
1 egg
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoons ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon salt
Additional sugar

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine flour, nutmeg and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture. Cover and chill for 1 hour or until firm.

On a sugared surface, shape 1/2 cupfuls of dough into 1/2-in.-thick logs. Cut logs into 2- to 2-1/2-in. pieces. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** about 5 dozen.

Nutty Caramel Popcorn

Folks who've tasted my snack are quick to remind me to make it again for them the following Christmas! The sugary combination of popcorn and crunchy nuts really hits the spot. —Sharon Buchinski
Endeavour, Saskatchewan

4 quarts popped popcorn
1-1/3 cups pecan halves, toasted
2/3 cup whole unblanched almonds, toasted
1-1/3 cups sugar
1 cup butter
1/2 cup light corn syrup
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Place popcorn in a large greased bowl. Sprinkle the pecans and almonds over top; set aside. In a heavy saucepan, combine the sugar, butter and corn syrup; cook and stir over medium heat until a candy thermometer reads 300°-310° (hard-crack stage).

Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla. Immediately pour over popcorn mixture; toss gently. Spread on greased baking sheets. When cool, break into small pieces. Store in airtight containers. **Yield:** about 20 cups.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

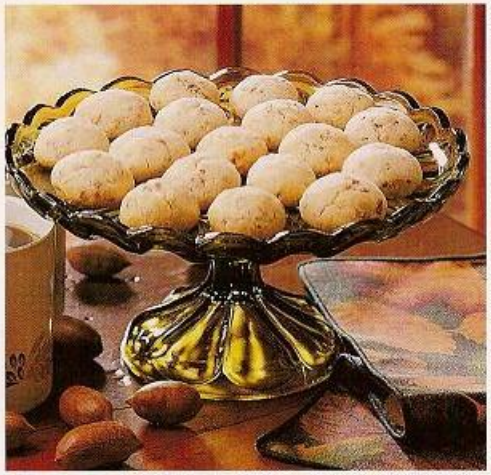
Spiced Oatmeal Cookies

I'm the fourth generation of cooks in my family to bake these cookies. The recipe is one that I will definitely make sure gets passed on!

—Loretta Pakulski
Indian River, Michigan

Pecan Sandies

When grandchildren visit, they go through these cookies like locusts in a wheat field! I always tell my husband to try hiding them, but the grandkids' little noses find them every time. *—Martha Crowe*
La Plata, Maryland



Scandinavian Almond Bars

Delicate and crisp with a rich butter and almond flavor, these cookies are irresistible—and they look so lovely on a cookie tray! They're a tradition for us and definitely worth the extra effort they require.

—Melva Baumer
Millmont, Pennsylvania

Apricot Crescents

When I was in college, my roommate's mother sent these flaky horns in a holiday care package. I've been making them ever since. When I mail them to my parents, I put an equal number in two tins labeled "his" and "hers" so there's no squabbling over who gets more. *—Tamyra Vest*
Scottsburg, Virginia

Scandinavian Almond Bars

1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon milk
1/2 cup sliced almonds, chopped
ICING:
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1/4 teaspoon almond extract
1 to 2 tablespoons milk

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar; beat in egg and extract. Combine dry ingredients; add to creamed mixture and mix well.

Divide dough into fourths; form into 12-in. x 3-in. rectangles. Place 5 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Brush with milk; sprinkle with almonds.

Bake at 325° for 18-20 minutes or until firm to the touch and edges are lightly browned. Cool on pans for 5 minutes, then cut diagonally into 1-in. slices. Remove to wire racks to cool completely. Combine icing ingredients; drizzle over bars. **Yield:** about 4 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Apricot Crescents

1 cup butter
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 egg yolk
1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 cup apricot preserves
1/2 cup flaked coconut
1/4 cup finely chopped pecans
Sugar

In a bowl, cut butter into flour until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Beat egg yolk and sour cream; add to crumb mixture and mix well. Chill several hours or overnight.

Divide dough into fourths. On a sugared surface, roll each portion into a 10-in. circle. Turn dough over to sugar top side. Combine preserves, coconut and pecans; spread over circles. Cut each circle into 12 wedges and roll each wedge into a crescent shape, starting at the wide end. Sprinkle with sugar. Place points down 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake at 350° for 15-17 minutes or until set and very lightly browned. Immediately remove to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Spiced Oatmeal Cookies

1 cup shortening
2 cups packed brown sugar
2 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 cups old-fashioned oats
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a mixing bowl, cream shortening and brown sugar. Add eggs and milk; mix well. Combine flour, oats, baking soda, salt and cinnamon; add to the creamed mixture. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until done. Remove to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Pecan Sandies

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup cake flour
1/2 cup finely chopped pecans

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar; stir in vanilla. Add flour; mix on low until well blended. Stir in pecans; mix well. Chill for 30 minutes. Roll into 1-in. balls; place on a greased baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes or until bottom edges are golden brown. Cool on a wire rack. **Yield:** about 1-1/2 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Macadamia Nut Fudge

My aunt now lives in Hawaii, and she keeps our family supplied with fresh macadamia nuts...along with recipes like this one. When I run out of macadamias for candy-making, I substitute pecans.

—Vicki Fioranelli
Cleveland, Mississippi

Peanut Butter Brownie Cups

Pressed for time during the hectic holidays? Start with a boxed mix and stir up these treats in no time!

—Karen Presbrey
Pascoag, Rhode Island

White Velvet Cutouts

We make these cutouts every Christmas and give lots of them as gifts. One year, we baked a batch a week all through December to be sure we'd have plenty for ourselves, too. These rich cookies melt in your mouth!—Kim Hinkle
Wauseon, Ohio

Christmas Molasses Cookies

Nothing smells better than warm molasses cookies baking on a cold winter day! These cookies look lovely when they're cut out in holiday shapes.

—Deborah Hill
Coffeyville, Kansas

White Velvet Cutouts

2 cups butter, softened
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
2 cups sugar
2 egg yolks
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
BUTTER CREAM FROSTING:
3-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar, *divided*
3 tablespoons butter, softened
1 tablespoon shortening
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 to 4 tablespoons milk, *divided*
Red *and/or* green food coloring, *optional

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and cream cheese until light and fluffy. Add sugar, egg yolks and vanilla; mix well. Gradually add flour. Cover; chill 2 hours or until firm. Roll out on a floured surface to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut into 3-in. shapes; place 1 in. apart on greased baking sheets.

Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until set (not browned). Cool 5 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool. For frosting, combine 1-1/2 cups sugar, butter, shortening, vanilla and 3 tablespoons milk in a mixing bowl; beat until smooth. Gradually add remaining sugar; beat until light and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Add enough remaining milk and food coloring until frosting reaches desired consistency. Frost cookies. **Yield:** about 7 dozen.

***Editor's Note:** For a deeper color of frosting, tint with food coloring paste available at kitchen and cake decorating supply stores.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Christmas Molasses Cookies

2/3 cup butter, softened
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup dark corn syrup
1/2 cup dark molasses
1/4 cup orange juice
4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup whole wheat flour
2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground allspice

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Blend in corn syrup, molasses and orange juice. Combine dry ingredients; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Chill for 3-4 hours or overnight.

Divide dough into four portions. Roll dough, a portion at a time, on a lightly floured surface to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut into desired shapes with a 2-1/2-in. cookie cutter. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets.

Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes. Cookies will be soft and chewy if baked 12 minutes, crunchy if baked longer. Remove to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** 6-7 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Macadamia Nut Fudge

4-1/2 cups sugar
1/2 cup butter
1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk
3 packages (4 ounces *each*) German sweet chocolate, chopped
2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1 jar (7 ounces) marshmallow creme
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 teaspoon salt
3 cups crushed macadamia nuts *or* toasted pecans, *divided*

Line two 9-in. square baking pans with foil and butter the foil; set aside. Combine sugar, butter and milk in heavy pan; bring to a gentle boil. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; add chocolate, chocolate chips, marshmallow cream, vanilla, salt and 2 cups nuts. Pour into prepared pans; sprinkle with remaining nuts and press in lightly. Chill until firm. Remove from pans and cut into squares. **Yield:** about 5 pounds.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Peanut Butter Brownie Cups

1 package (19.8 ounces) fudge brownie mix*
15 to 18 miniature peanut butter cups

Prepare brownie batter according to package directions. Fill paper-lined or foil-lined muffin cups two-thirds full. Remove wrappers from peanut butter cups; set one in each muffin cup and press down until batter meets the top edge of the candy. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes. **Yield:** about 1-1/2 dozen.

***Editor's Note:** This recipe was tested using Betty Crocker's Fudge Brownie mix.

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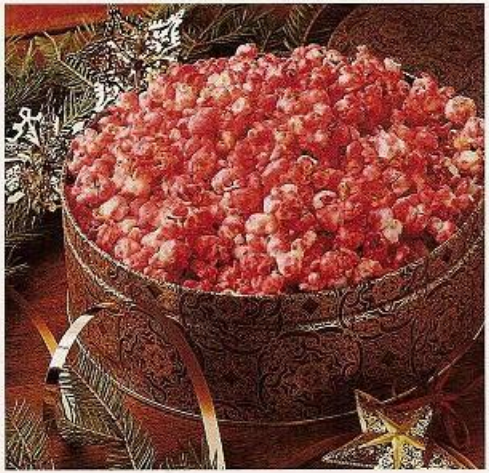
Cinnamon Candy Popcorn



This crisp bright-colored snack is more festive than traditional caramel corn. My family just loves it! A friend shared the recipe, and I've given it to several people myself. Set out in pretty bowls, it makes a tasty table decoration.

—Kaye Kemper
Windfall, Indiana

Snow Flurry Brownies

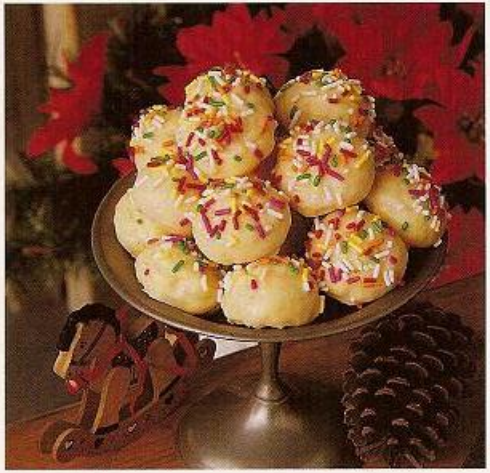
These brownies are the best dessert in my recipe box. I've even prepared them on the spur of the moment while company was over for dinner. They take just minutes to mix up, are out of the oven in half an hour and generate many compliments.

—Sherry Olson
Boulder, Colorado

Hazelnut Shortbread

We have several acres of hazelnut trees here in the Willamette Valley, where the climate is perfect for this crop. I try to incorporate this wonderful flavorful nut into our recipes, and this cookie is always a hit. *—Karen Morrell*
Canby, Oregon

Italian Sprinkle Cookies



These cookies take a little time—but, believe me, they are well worth it! My husband and I used to operate an Italian-American restaurant, and this recipe goes back generations.

—Gloria Cracchiolo
Newburgh, New York

Hazelnut Shortbread

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup *or* honey
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1-1/4 cups finely chopped hazelnuts *or* filberts
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add syrup and vanilla. Add flour and mix just until combined; fold in the nuts. Shape into two 1-1/2-in. rolls; wrap tightly in waxed paper. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm. Cut into 1/4-in. slices and place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake at 325° for 14-16 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Remove to wire racks to cool. Melt chocolate chips; drizzle over cookies. Allow chocolate to harden. **Yield:** about 6 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Italian Sprinkle Cookies

- 6 eggs
- 5 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons plus 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon almond extract
- 1-1/2 teaspoons lemon extract

GLAZE:

- 1/2 cup warm milk
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3-3/4 cups confectioners' sugar

Colored sprinkles (jimmies)

In a mixing bowl, beat eggs until light and foamy, about 5 minutes. Set aside. In another mixing bowl, stir together flour, sugar and baking powder; gradually add oil and extracts. Gradually add eggs (dough will be stiff). Roll dough into 1-in. balls. Place on ungreased baking sheets.

Bake at 350° for 12 minutes or until edges begin to brown. For glaze, combine milk and extracts in a large bowl. Add sugar; whisk until the glaze is smooth. As soon as cookies are removed from the oven, quickly immerse two or three at a time into the glaze. Remove with a slotted spoon or fingers. Place cookies on wire racks to drain. Quickly top with sprinkles. Let dry 24 hours before storing in airtight containers. **Yield:** about 7 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cinnamon Candy Popcorn

- 8 quarts plain popped popcorn
- 1 cup butter
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 1 package (9 ounces) red-hot candies

Place popcorn in a large bowl and set aside. In a saucepan, combine butter, corn syrup and candies; bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Pour over popcorn and mix thoroughly. Turn into two greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pans.

Bake at 250° for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes. Remove from pans and place on waxed paper to cool. Break apart; store in airtight containers. **Yield:** 8 quarts.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Snow Flurry Brownies

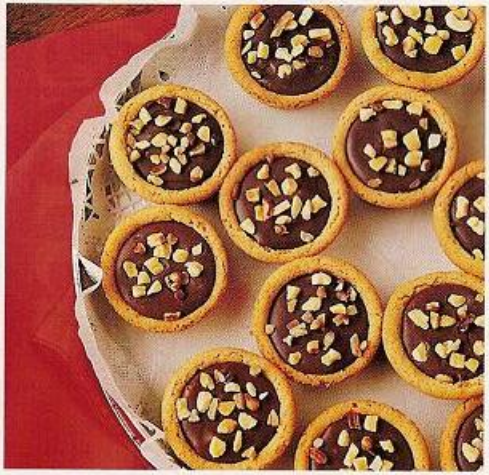
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, melted
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup baking cocoa
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup vanilla *or* white chips
- 1/2 cup chopped macadamia nuts *or* almonds

In a bowl, whisk together sugar, butter, eggs and vanilla. Combine flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt; add to sugar mixture and mix well. Stir in vanilla chips and nuts. Spread into a greased 8-in. square baking pan.

Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out with moist crumbs (do not overbake). Cool on a wire rack. Cut into diamond shapes if desired. **Yield:** 16 brownies.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

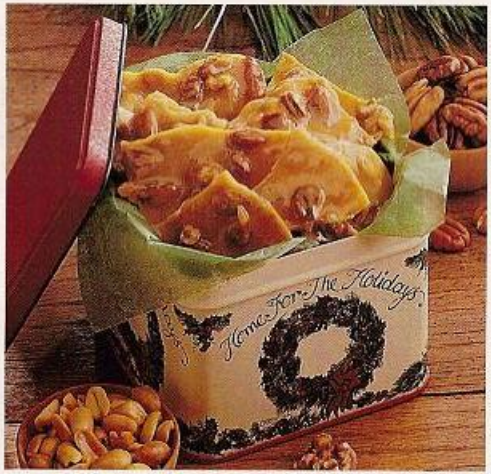
Fudge Puddles



We stopped for a snack one day when we were out shopping, and it tasted so good that it inspired me to make these cookies. I changed some of the ingredients when I got home, and my Fudge Puddles became a favorite with my husband's family.

—Kimarie Maassen
Avoca, Iowa

Four-Nut Brittle



We delight in being hospitable—it's the true mark of a country home...even if it is in the city. This recipe is one I created myself. I enjoy various kinds of nuts and wanted a candy that has a different crunch in every bite.

—Kelly-Ann Gibbons
Prince George, British Columbia

Almond Raspberry Stars

The first time that I baked these, I quickly had to make a second batch because my family had gobbled them up in no time flat. *—Darlene Weaver*
Lebanon, Pennsylvania

Peanut Butter Snowballs

These creamy treats are a nice change from the typical milk chocolate and peanut butter combination. This recipe is also an easy one for children to help with.

—Wanda Regula
Birmingham, Michigan

Almond Raspberry Stars

3/4 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon almond extract
1-3/4 cups plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons finely chopped almonds
1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 egg white, lightly beaten
1/3 cup raspberry jam

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Add extracts and beat until well mixed. Stir in flour. Shape into a ball; cover and refrigerate for 15 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to a 1/4-in. thickness. Cut into about 72 stars, half 2-1/2 in. and half 1-1/2 in. Combine almonds, sugar and cinnamon. Brush small stars with egg white and immediately sprinkle with cinnamon/sugar mixture. Leave large stars plain.

Bake on ungreased baking sheets at 350° for 10 minutes (small stars) to 12 minutes (large stars) or until the tips just begin to brown. Cool on wire racks. To assemble, spread enough jam over large star to cover the center. Top with a small star. Press lightly; jam should show around edge of small star. Let jam set before storing. **Yield:** about 3 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Peanut Butter Snowballs

1 cup confectioners' sugar
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
3 tablespoons butter, softened
1 pound white candy coating

In a mixing bowl, combine sugar, peanut butter and butter; mix well. Shape into 1-in. balls and place on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until firm. Meanwhile, melt the white coating in a double boiler or microwave-safe bowl. Dip balls and place on waxed paper to harden. **Yield:** 2 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Fudge Puddles

1/2 cup butter, softened
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt

FUDGE FILLING:

1 cup (6 ounces) milk chocolate chips
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Chopped peanuts

In a mixing bowl, cream butter, peanut butter and sugars; add egg and vanilla. Combine flour, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture. Mix well. Refrigerate for 1 hour. Shape into 48 balls, 1 in. each. Place in greased miniature muffin cups.

Bake at 325° for 14-16 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from oven and immediately make wells in the center of each by lightly pressing with a melon baller. Cool in pans for 5 minutes, then carefully remove to wire racks.

For filling, melt chocolate chips in a double boiler. Stir in milk and vanilla; mix well. Using a measuring cup or pastry bag, fill each shell. Sprinkle with peanuts. (Leftover filling can be stored in the refrigerator and served warm over ice cream.) **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Four-Nut Brittle

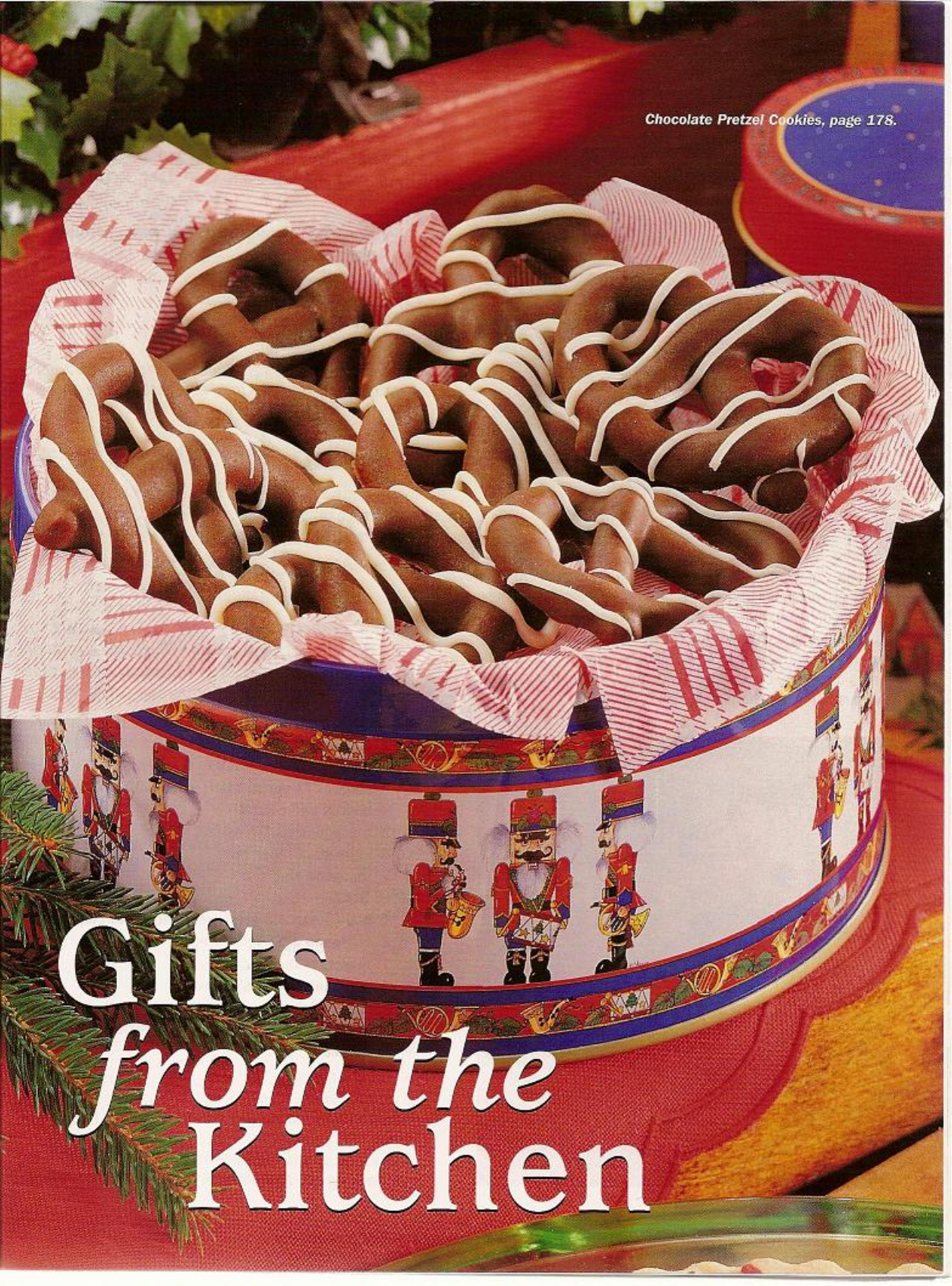
2 cups sugar
1 cup light corn syrup
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup salted peanuts
1/2 cup *each* coarsely chopped almonds, pecans and walnuts
1/4 cup butter
2 teaspoons baking soda
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Butter the sides of a large heavy saucepan. Add sugar, corn syrup and water; bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until a candy thermometer reads 238° (soft-ball stage). Stir in nuts and butter. Cook over medium heat to 300° (hard-crack stage).

Remove from the heat; vigorously stir in baking soda and vanilla until blended. Quickly pour onto two greased baking sheets, spreading as thinly as possible with a metal spatula. Cool completely; break into pieces. Store in an airtight container with waxed paper between layers. **Yield:** 1-3/4 pounds.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004



Gifts *from the* Kitchen

Cranberry Nut Bread

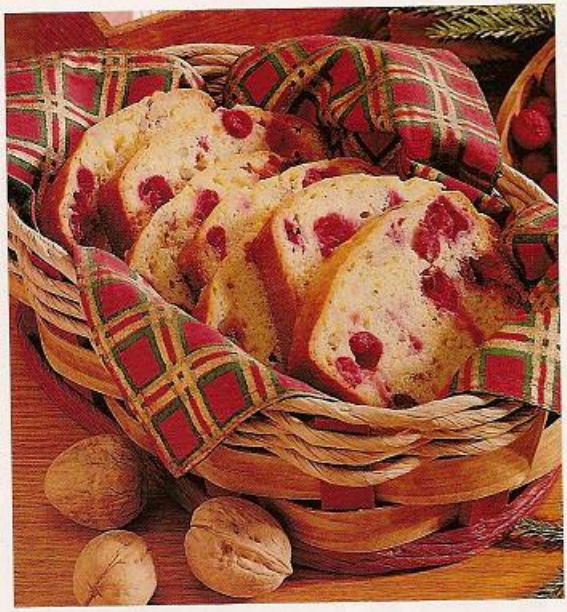
(Pictured below)

I created this recipe years ago by combining a couple of recipes from my collection. A friend suggested I add even more cranberries. Now there's a big burst of tart cranberries and lots of crunchy nuts in every piece.
—Dawn Lowenstein, Hatboro, Pennsylvania

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/4 cup cold butter**
- **1 egg**
- **3/4 cup orange juice**
- **1 tablespoon grated orange peel**
- **1-1/2 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries**
- **1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

In a bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and baking soda. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Beat egg, orange juice and peel; stir into dry ingredients just until blended. Add the cranberries and walnuts.

Spoon into a greased and floured 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 65-70 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack to cool completely. **Yield:** 1 loaf.



Hot Chocolate Mix

Chocolate always makes a great gift, especially in this warming hot chocolate mix. *—Margery Richmond, Winnipeg, Manitoba*

- **4 squares (1 ounce *each*) semisweet chocolate, grated**
- **1/2 cup baking cocoa**
- **1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **Dash salt**

In a bowl, combine all ingredients. To prepare, add 2 tablespoons mix to 3/4 cup hot milk. **Yield:** 1-1/2 cups dry mix.

Chocolate Pretzel Cookies

(Pictured on page 177)

These pretzel-shaped, buttery chocolate cookies are covered in a rich mocha glaze and drizzled with white chocolate. My family goes wild over their chocolaty crunch. *—Priscilla Anderson, Salt Lake City, Utah*

- **1/2 cup butter, softened**
- **2/3 cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **2 squares (1 ounce *each*) unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled**
- **2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- **1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**

MOCHA GLAZE:

- **1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- **1 teaspoon light corn syrup**
- **1 teaspoon shortening**
- **1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **4 to 5 tablespoons hot coffee**
- **2 squares (1 ounce *each*) white baking chocolate, melted**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add egg, chocolate and vanilla; mix well. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Cover and chill for 1 hour or until firm.

Divide dough into fourths; form each portion into a 6-in. log. Divide each log into 12 pieces; roll each piece into a 9-in. rope.

Place ropes on greased baking sheets; form into pretzel shapes and space 2 in. apart. Bake at 400° for 5-7 minutes or until firm. Cool 1 minute before removing to wire racks.

For glaze, heat the chocolate chips, corn syrup and shortening in a small saucepan over low heat until melted. Stir in sugar and enough coffee to make a smooth glaze.

Dip pretzels; place on waxed paper or wire racks to harden. Drizzle with white chocolate; let stand until chocolate is completely set. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 4 dozen.

Raspberry Chocolate Sauce

A sweet sauce featuring raspberries and chocolate makes a wonderful topping for ice cream or pound cake.
—Linda Gronewaller, Hutchinson, Kansas

- **1 package (12 ounces) unsweetened frozen raspberries, thawed**
- **3/4 cup baking cocoa**
- **3/4 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **1/3 cup light corn syrup**
- **1/4 cup butter, softened**

Puree raspberries in a food processor or blender. Press through a fine sieve; set aside puree. In a saucepan, combine cocoa and cream. Add sugar, corn syrup, butter and raspberries; mix well.

Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring often. Boil for 8 minutes without stirring. Remove from the heat. Cool at least 15 minutes before serving. Spoon over ice cream, pound cake or brownies. Refrigerate leftovers in a covered container. **Yield:** 3-1/4 cups.

Almond Coffee Creamer

This tasty creamer has just four simple ingredients—but its spicy almond flavor is so rich and soothing, friends will think you fussed. I give it in a holiday jar or with a Christmas mug. *—Janet Lippincott, Akron, Ohio*

- **3/4 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **3/4 cup powdered nondairy creamer**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1 teaspoon almond extract**

In a bowl, combine all the ingredients; mix well. Store in an airtight container. To use, add to coffee in place of nondairy creamer and sugar. **Yield:** 1-1/4 cups.

Sweet-and-Sour Mustard

(Pictured above)

I give this mustard to friends as a Christmas gift. I use it in my own kitchen as well—in everything from honey-mustard chicken to sandwiches. *—Cheri White, Richland, Michigan*

- **1 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1/2 cup cider or raspberry vinegar**
- **1/3 cup ground mustard**
- **2 tablespoons water**
- **2 eggs, lightly beaten**

In a saucepan, whisk together all ingredients. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until a thermometer reads 160° and mixture is thickened. Pour into small jars. Cover and refrigerate. **Yield:** 1-1/2 cups.

Top to bottom: Carrot, Cherry and Coconut Bread, White Pecan Fudge and Cranberry Butter.

Cranberry Butter

(Pictured at left)

This tart spread is great on toast, over poultry and on ice cream! You can use either fresh or frozen cranberries, so you can make it throughout the year. We especially enjoy it around the holidays, though.

—Carol Studebaker, Gladstone, Missouri

10 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries
2/3 cup apple juice
1/2 to 3/4 cup sugar
1 cup maple syrup
1/2 cup honey
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a saucepan over medium heat, bring cranberries, apple juice and sugar to a boil. Cook for 10-15 minutes or until all berries have popped, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat; cool slightly. Process in batches in a blender or food processor until smooth.

Return cranberry mixture to the saucepan; add remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes or until thickened, stirring occasionally. Cover and chill for 8 hours or overnight. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 5 cups.

White Pecan Fudge

(Pictured at left)

Each Christmas, I package batches of this rich fudge to send to family and friends. Everyone agrees that it's just delicious and looks forward to this yearly gift.

—Marie Draper, Price, Utah

1 tablespoon plus 1/2 cup butter, *divided*
2-1/2 cups miniature marshmallows
2-1/4 cups sugar
1 cup heavy whipping cream
16 squares (1 ounce *each*) white baking chocolate, cut into small pieces
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups chopped pecans

Line a 9-in. square pan with foil. Grease the foil with 1/2 tablespoon butter and set aside. Butter the sides of a large heavy saucepan with 1/2 tablespoon butter. Cut remaining butter into small pieces and place in a large heat-proof bowl; add marshmallows and set aside.

In the buttered saucepan, combine sugar and cream. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil. Cover and cook for 2 minutes to dissolve any sugar crystals. Uncover; cook over medium heat, without stirring, until a candy thermometer reads 234° (soft-ball stage).

Remove from the heat. Pour over butter and marshmallows; stir until melted. Add the chocolate. Continue stirring until chocolate is melted and mixture is smooth. Stir in vanilla and nuts. Pour into prepared pan. Refrigerate until firm.

Lift out of pan; remove foil and cut into 1-in. squares. Store in an airtight container at room temperature. **Yield:** about 3-1/2 pounds (about 6-1/2 dozen).

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

Carrot, Cherry and Coconut Bread

(Pictured at left)

The tasty combination of carrots, coconut and cherries makes each loaf a welcome gift! These three ingredients are surprisingly tasty together.

—Edna Robinson Bowland, Lakewood, Colorado

2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 eggs
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup vegetable oil
2 cups shredded carrots
1-1/2 cups flaked coconut
1/2 cup candied cherries, quartered
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup chopped pecans

In a large bowl, combine the first six ingredients. In a small bowl, combine the eggs, milk and oil. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in the carrots, coconut, cherries, raisins and pecans. Pour into four greased 5-3/4-in. x 3-in. x 2-in. loaf pans.

Bake at 350° for 40-50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. Cover and store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 4 mini loaves.

Caramel Apple Cake

(Pictured above)

When I go to potlucks or family gatherings with my husband and son, this cake is one of my favorite desserts to bring. The flavorful cake stays moist as long as it lasts, which isn't long! —Marilyn Paradis, Woodburn, Oregon

1-1/2 cups vegetable oil
1-1/2 cups sugar
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
3 eggs
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
3-1/2 cups diced peeled apples
1 cup chopped walnuts
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

CARAMEL ICING:
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/3 cup half-and-half cream
1/4 cup butter
Dash salt
1 cup confectioners' sugar
Chopped walnuts, optional

In a mixing bowl, combine oil and sugars. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine dry ingredients; add to batter and mix well. Fold in apples, walnuts and vanilla. Pour into a greased and floured 10-in. tube pan. Bake at 325° for 1-1/2 hours or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes, then remove to a wire rack to cool completely.

In the top of a double boiler over simmering water, heat brown sugar, cream, butter and salt until sugar is dissolved. Cool to room temperature. Beat in confectioners' sugar until smooth; drizzle over cake. Sprinkle with nuts if desired. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Lemon Butter Spread

(Pictured below)

My grandmother, who was a great cook, brought this recipe with her from England. I use it as a spread on toast, for filling in a cake or on top of ice cream. —Gloria Costes, West Hills, California

1 cup butter
2 cups sugar
3 eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 cup lemon juice
1 tablespoon grated lemon peel

In a double boiler over boiling water, melt butter. Stir in sugar, eggs, lemon juice and peel. Reduce heat; cook over simmering water for 1 hour or until mixture thickens and reaches 160°, stirring occasionally. Pour into containers. Cover and store in the refrigerator. Spread on toast or muffins or use over angel food or pound cake. **Yield:** 3 cups.

Chocolate Mini Loaves

(Pictured above)

The moist texture of these mini loaves resembles a pound cake. Each bite is rich and succulent, making this perfect for dessert as well as snacking.

—Elizabeth Downey, Evart, Michigan

1/2 cup butter, softened
2/3 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips, melted
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1-1/2 cups applesauce
1/2 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips

GLAZE:

1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
1 tablespoon butter
5 teaspoons water
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
Dash salt

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and brown sugar. Add melted chocolate chips, eggs and vanilla; mix well. Combine the flour, baking powder and baking soda; add to creamed mixture alternately with applesauce. Fold in miniature chocolate chips.

Divide batter among five greased 5-3/4-in. x 3-in. x 2-in. loaf pans, about 1 cup in each. Bake at 350° for 30-40 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.

For glaze, combine chocolate chips, butter and water in a saucepan; cook and stir over low heat until chocolate is melted. Remove from the heat; stir in confectioners' sugar, vanilla and salt. Drizzle over cooled loaves. **Yield:** 5 mini loaves.

Editor's Note: Two 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pans may be used; bake for 50-55 minutes.

Cranberry Vinegar

(Pictured below)

Cranberry stars in this vinegar you can make and share with friends. Just remember to save some for yourself!

—Lesley Colgan, London, Ontario

3/4 cup vinegar
3/4 cup water
3/4 cup sugar
1 cinnamon stick (4 inches)
1 package (12 ounces) fresh *or* frozen cranberries

In a saucepan, bring all ingredients to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes or until the cranberries burst. Cool. Strain through a fine sieve into bottles or jars. Seal tightly. Discard cranberries and cinnamon stick. Chill until ready to use in your favorite oil-and-vinegar salad dressing. **Yield:** 1-1/2 cups.

Praline Sundae Topping

Necessity can be the mother of recipes, too! I came up with this one as a way of using up the extra evaporated milk I had from making fudge. —Valerie Cook Hubbard, Iowa

1/4 cup butter
1-1/4 cups packed brown sugar
16 large marshmallows
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
Dash salt
1 cup evaporated milk
1/2 cup chopped pecans, toasted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Ice cream

Melt butter in a saucepan. Add brown sugar, marshmallows, corn syrup and salt. Cook and stir over low heat until marshmallows are melted and mixture comes to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Remove from the heat; cool for 5 minutes. Stir in evaporated milk, pecans and vanilla; mix well. Serve warm or cold over ice cream. Store in the refrigerator. **Yield:** 2-1/2 cups.

Coconut Bread

I've received many requests for this recipe. It's easy to make and just a little different from the other quick breads I've tried. Coconut and walnuts are a nice combination. —Virginia Doyle, Pinedale, Wyoming

3 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
4 eggs, lightly beaten
2 teaspoons coconut extract
1 cup buttermilk
1 cup flaked coconut
1 cup chopped walnuts

Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; set aside. In a large bowl, combine sugar, oil, eggs and coconut extract. Add dry ingredients alternately with buttermilk; stir just until moistened. Fold in coconut and nuts. Pour into two greased and floured 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pans. Bake at 325° for 1 hour or until breads test done. Cool 10 minutes in pans before removing to a wire rack to cool completely. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Plum-Apple Butter

I look forward to cooking up this fruity spread each December, using the plums I picked and froze during summer. —Nancy Michel, Lakeland, Florida

2 pounds tart apples, peeled and quartered
2 pounds plums, pitted and quartered
1 cup water
3 cups sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice

Place apples, plums and water in a large kettle; cover and simmer until tender, about 15 minutes. Cool. Puree in batches in a food processor or blender; return all to the kettle. Add sugar and spices.

Simmer, uncovered, for 20-30 minutes or until thickened, stirring frequently. Cool completely. Pour into jars. Cover and store in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks. **Yield:** 5 cups.

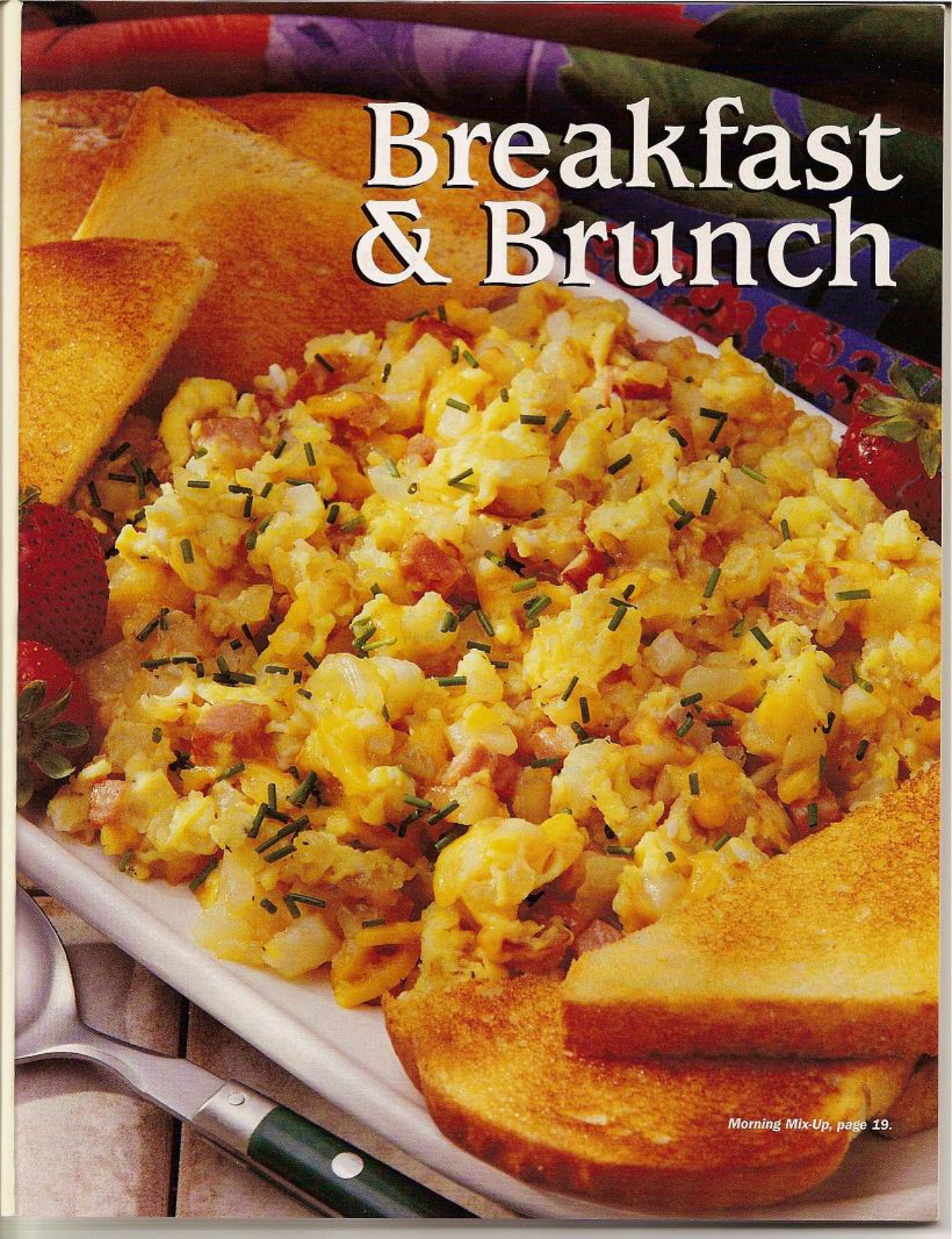
Zippy Dry Rub

Bottles of this spicy blend are fun to share with family and friends. It's a mixture with broad appeal since the rub can be used on all meats or added to rice while it's cooking for a boost of flavor. —Gaynelle Fritsch Welches, Oregon

1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon mustard seed
1 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon dried coriander
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

In a small bowl, combine all ingredients. Store in an airtight container. Rub desired amount onto the surface of uncooked meat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours before grilling. **Yield:** about 2-1/2 tablespoons.

Breakfast & Brunch



Morning Mix-Up, page 19.

Lemon Candy Canes continued from page 13

til smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide in half. Let rest for 10 minutes. Roll each into a 12-in. x 8-in. rectangle. In a bowl, combine filling ingredients; mix well. Spread half of filling over dough to within 1/2 in. of edges. Fold in half lengthwise; pinch seam to seal. Cut into 12 strips. Holding both ends of strip, twist each strip three or four times. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Curve one end to form a cane. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes.

Bake at 375° for 12-14 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool. Combine icing ingredients; drizzle over rolls. **Yield:** 2 dozen.

Fruity Breakfast Sauce

(Pictured below)

This is our family's favorite breakfast topping. Sometimes I'll substitute cherry pie filling for the blueberry pie filling—it's tasty, too! —*Rita Wagenmann, Grangeville, Idaho*

6 cups finely chopped rhubarb
4 cups sugar
1 can (21 ounces) blueberry pie filling
1 package (3 ounces) raspberry gelatin

In a saucepan, bring rhubarb and sugar to a boil. Boil for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat; add pie filling and mix well. Bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and stir in gelatin. Store the sauce in jars or freezer containers. Refrigerate or freeze until serving. Serve with pancakes, waffles, toast or English muffins. **Yield:** 7 cups.

Quiche Lorraine

(Pictured above)

Ideal for a brunch or luncheon, this classic recipe highlights a delicious meal. Try serving a wedge with fresh fruit of the season and homemade muffins for a plate that will look as good as the food tastes! —*Marcy Cella, L'Anse, Michigan*

CRUST:
2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup butter-flavored shortening
3 to 4 tablespoons cold water

FILLING:
12 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled

4 eggs
2 cups half-and-half cream
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1-1/4 cups shredded Swiss cheese

Combine flour and salt in a bowl. Cut in shortening until crumbly. Gradually add water, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Divide dough in half. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to fit a 9-in. pie plate; transfer to pie plate. Trim and flute edges. Chill. Wrap remaining dough; chill or freeze for another use.

For filling, sprinkle crumbled bacon in the chilled pie crust. In a bowl, beat eggs, cream, salt and nutmeg. Stir in cheese. Pour into crust. Bake at 425° for 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 325°; bake 30-40 minutes longer or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Chocolate Cinnamon Doughnuts

(Pictured above right)

These doughnuts are a favorite of our three grown children. Make them up at night. Then the next morning, it's quick and easy to roll them out and fry them when everyone else is getting ready for the day.

—Judi Eake, Chaffee, Missouri

2 eggs
1-1/4 cups sugar
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 cups all-purpose flour
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 cup buttermilk
Oil for deep-fat frying
GLAZE:
4 cups sifted confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
6 tablespoons milk

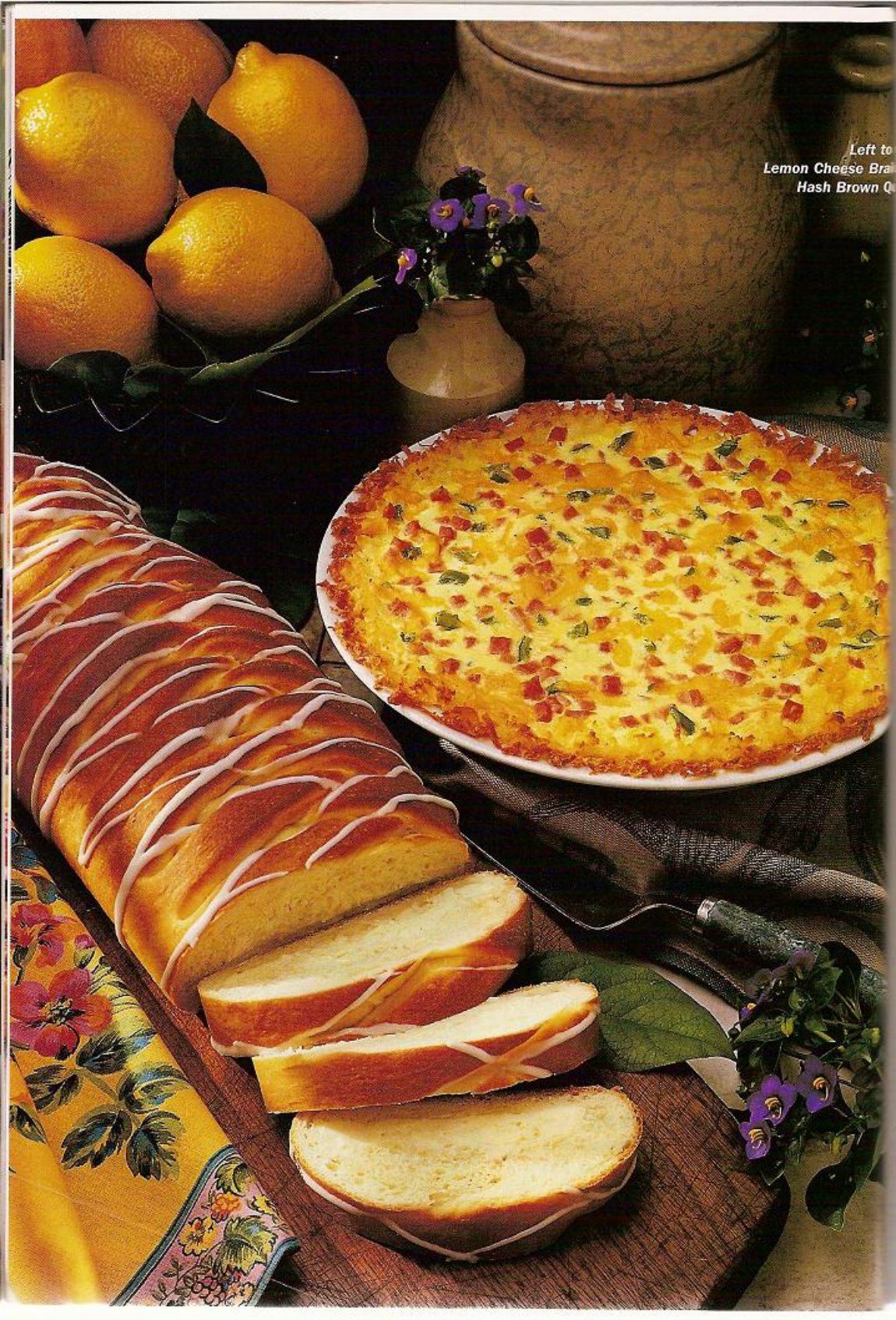
In a mixing bowl, beat eggs and sugar until mixture is thick and lemon-colored. Stir in oil and vanilla. In another bowl, combine flour, cocoa, baking powder, cinnamon, salt and baking soda. Stir into egg mixture alternately with buttermilk. Chill.

Divide dough in half and put half in the refrigerator. On a lightly floured surface, roll to 1/2-in. thickness. Cut with a 2-1/2-in. floured doughnut cutter. Repeat with remaining dough.

Heat oil in an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer to 375°; fry doughnuts until golden. Drain on paper towels. Combine glaze ingredients and dip tops of warm doughnuts. **Yield:** 2 dozen.

Doughnut Do's and Don'ts

- Doughnut shapes can be made with a doughnut cutter or with two biscuit cutters, one large and one small (for the hole).
- Chilling any doughnut dough before frying reduces the amount of oil absorbed during frying.
- Don't fill the pot more than halfway with oil to allow for bubbling and splattering.
- Fry only a few doughnuts at a time; crowding the pan will lower the oil's temperature and create greasier doughnuts.
- Cool warm doughnuts on a rack at least 10 minutes before serving.
- Unglazed doughnuts may be frozen in a plastic bag for up to 6 months.
- To reheat frozen doughnuts, place them (still frozen) on an ungreased baking sheet, lightly cover with foil and heat at 350° for 10-15 minutes.



Left to
Lemon Cheese Bra
Hash Brown Q

Lemon Cheese Braid

(Pictured at left)

This recipe came from my mom, who is an excellent cook. It always gets rave reviews. Although fairly simple to make, when you finish you'll feel a sense of accomplishment because it tastes delicious and looks so impressive. —*Grace Dickey, Vernonia, Oregon*

1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
3 tablespoons warm water (110° to 115°)
1/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup milk
1/4 cup butter, melted
2 eggs
1/2 teaspoon salt
3 to 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

2 packages (one 8 ounces, one 3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel

ICING:

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
2 to 3 teaspoons milk
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water; let stand for 5 minutes. Add sugar, milk, butter, eggs, salt and 2 cups flour; beat on low speed for 3 minutes. Stir in enough of the remaining flour to form a soft dough. Knead on a floured surface until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Meanwhile, beat filling ingredients in a mixing bowl until fluffy; set aside.

Punch dough down. On a floured surface, roll into a 14-in. x 12-in. rectangle. Place on a greased baking sheet. Spread filling down center third of rectangle. On each long side, cut 1-in.-wide strips, 3 in. into center. Starting at one end, fold alternating strips at an angle across filling. Seal end. Cover and let rise for 30 minutes.

Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool. Combine icing ingredients; drizzle over bread. **Yield:** 12-14 servings.

Say 'Cheese'

- There are two broad categories of natural cheese: ripened (such as cheddar and Swiss) and fresh (such as cottage cheese and cream cheese).
- Cheese yields: four ounces (1/4 pound) firm, semifirm or semisoft cheese = about 1 cup grated cheese.
- Cheeses like cheddar, Swiss and Monterey Jack are easier to grate if they're cold. Hard cheeses like Parmesan and Romano are easier to handle at room temperature.
- Make food processor cleanup easier by spraying the metal blade or grating disk with nonstick cooking spray before you begin grating cheese.
- Store sweet breads, desserts and other treats containing cream cheese in the refrigerator.

Hash Brown Quiche

(Pictured at left)

We love to have guests stay with us, and this is a great dish to serve for breakfast. To save time in the morning, I sometimes make the hash brown crust and chop the ham, cheese and peppers the night before.

—*Jan Peters, Chandler, Minnesota*

3 cups frozen loose-pack shredded hash browns, thawed
1/3 cup butter, melted
1 cup diced fully cooked ham
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
1/4 cup diced green pepper
2 eggs
1/2 cup milk
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper

Press hash browns between paper towel to remove excess moisture. Press into the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 9-in. pie plate. Drizzle with butter. Bake at 425° for 25 minutes. Combine the ham, cheese and green pepper; spoon over the crust.

In a small bowl, beat eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Pour over all. Reduce heat to 350°; bake for 25-30 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Allow to stand for 10 minutes before cutting. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Beef and Cheddar Quiche

(Pictured above)

This recipe is easy to prepare and perfect for a busy schedule. I've also made this recipe with salmon by substituting two cans for the ground beef and adding 1 tablespoon of fresh lemon juice. —*Jeanne Lee, Terrace Park, Ohio*

- **3/4 pound ground beef**
- **1 unbaked pastry shell (9 inches)**
- **3 eggs, beaten**
- **1/2 cup mayonnaise***
- **1/2 cup milk**
- **1/2 cup chopped onion**
- **4 teaspoons cornstarch**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, *divided***

In a skillet over medium heat, cook the beef until no longer pink. Meanwhile, line unpricked pastry shell with a double thickness of heavy-duty foil. Bake at 450° for 5 minutes. Remove foil; bake for 5 minutes more. Set aside.

Drain beef; place in a large bowl. Add the eggs, mayonnaise, milk, onion, cornstarch, salt, pepper and 1 cup cheese. Pour into crust. Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. If necessary, cover the edges of crust with foil to prevent overbrowning. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Let stand 5-10 minutes before cutting. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

***Editor's Note:** Reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise is not recomended for this recipe.

Banana Brunch Punch

(Pictured below)

A cold glass of refreshing punch really brightens a brunch. It's nice to serve a crisp beverage like this that's more special than plain juice. With bananas, orange juice and lemonade, it can add tropical flair to a winter day. —*Mary Anne McWhirter, Pearland, Texas*

- **6 medium ripe bananas**
- **1 can (12 ounces) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed**
- **1 can (6 ounces) frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed**
- **3 cups warm water, *divided***
- **2 cups sugar, *divided***
- **1 can (46 ounces) pineapple juice**
- **3 bottles (2 liters *each*) lemon-lime soda**
- **Orange slices, optional**

In a blender or food processor, blend bananas and concentrate until smooth. Remove half of the mixture and set aside. Add 1-1/2 cups of water and 1 cup sugar to mixture in blender; blend until smooth. Place in a large freezer container. Repeat

with remaining banana mixture, water and sugar; add to container. Cover and freeze until solid.

One hour before serving, take punch base out of freezer. Just before serving, place in a large punch bowl. Add pineapple juice and soda; stir until well blended. Garnish with orange slices if desired. **Yield:** 60-70 servings (10 quarts).

Morning Mix-Up

(Pictured above and on page 5)

This filling dish is super to serve for breakfast or supper. It's one of my family's favorites—even our daughter eats a hearty helping. Eggs, cheese, hash browns and ham go well together. —*Kim Scholting, Springfield, Nebraska*

2 cups frozen hash browns
1 cup chopped fully cooked ham
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
6 eggs
Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
Minced chives

In a large skillet, saute potatoes, ham and onion in oil for 10 minutes or until potatoes are tender. In a small bowl, beat eggs, salt and pepper. Add to the skillet; cook, stirring occasionally, until eggs are set. Remove from the heat and gently stir in cheese. Spoon onto a serving platter; sprinkle with chives. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Potluck Eggs Benedict

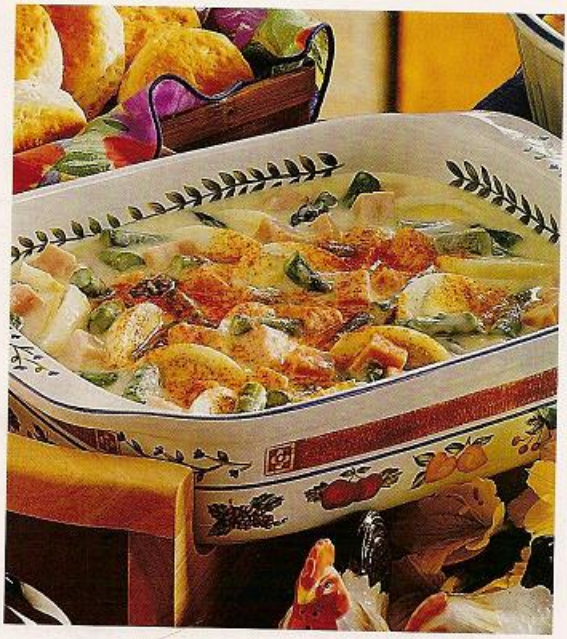
(Pictured below)

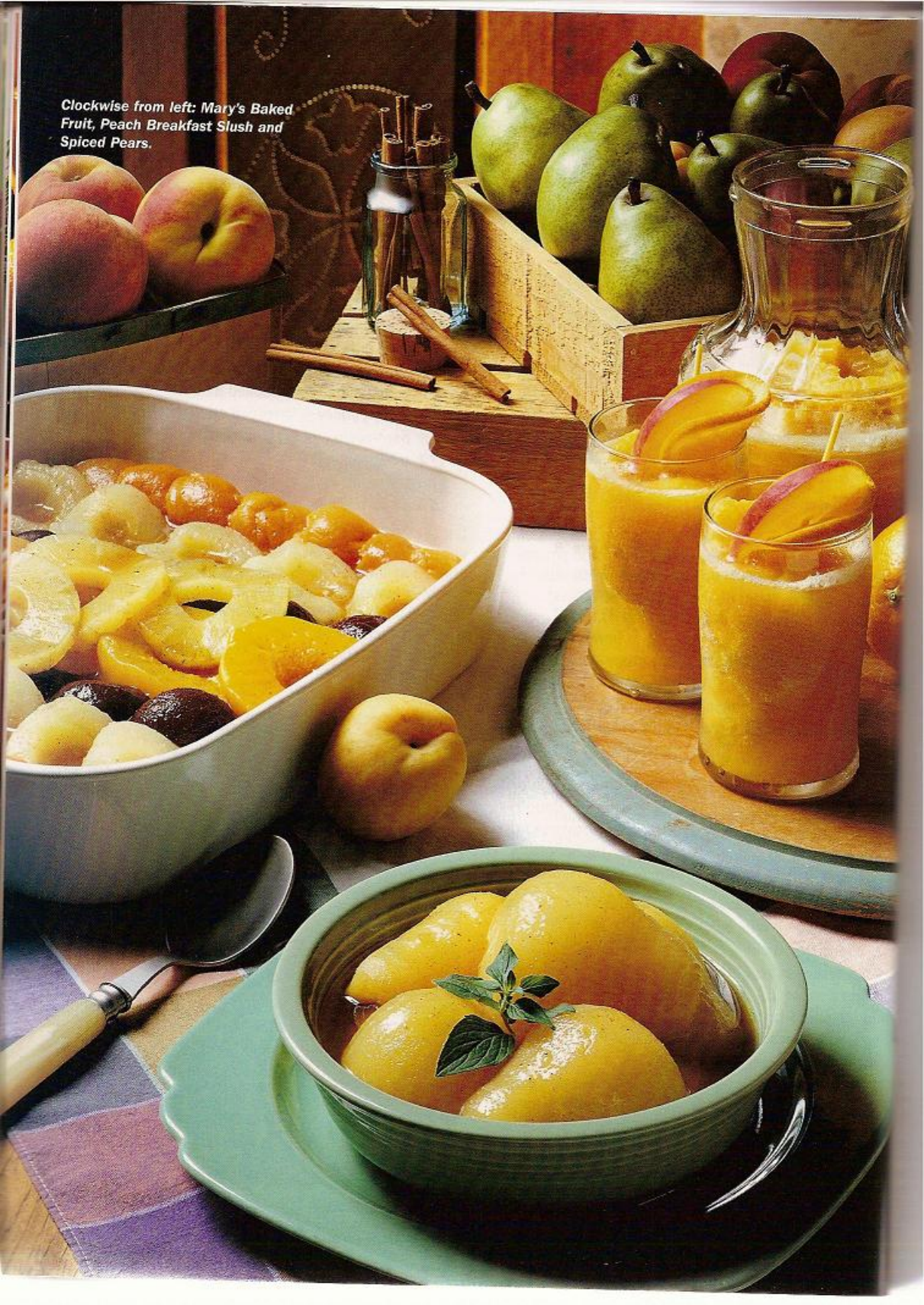
This hearty breakfast dish is super served over warm fluffy biscuits. Folks can't wait to dig in to the combination of eggs, ham, cheese and asparagus. —*Pauline van Breemen, Franklin, Indiana*

1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed
3/4 cup butter
3/4 cup all-purpose flour
4 cups milk
1 can (14-1/2 ounces) chicken broth
1 pound cubed fully cooked ham
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
8 hard-cooked eggs, quartered
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
10 to 12 biscuits, warmed

Cut asparagus into 1/2-in. pieces, using only tender parts of spears. Cook in a small amount of boiling water until tender, about 5 minutes; drain. Set aside to cool.

Melt butter in a saucepan; stir in flour until smooth. Add milk and broth; bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes. Add ham and cheese; stir until the cheese melts. Add eggs, salt, cayenne and asparagus; heat though. Serve over biscuits. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.





Clockwise from left: Mary's Baked Fruit, Peach Breakfast Slush and Spiced Pears.

Mary's Baked Fruit

(Pictured at left)

My family first sampled baked fruit years ago while dining out. They liked it so much I decided to create my own version. I like mine even better!

—Mary Neville, Fredericktown, Missouri

- **1 can (16 ounces) apricot halves, drained**
- **1 can (16 ounces) pear halves, drained**
- **1 can (30 ounces) whole plums, drained, halved and pitted**
- **1 can (29 ounces) peach halves, drained**
- **1 can (8 ounces) pineapple slices, undrained**
- **1/3 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 tablespoon butter**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cloves**

In a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish, starting at a 9-in. end, arrange rows of fruit in the following order: half of the apricots, pears and plums, all of the peaches, then remaining apricots, pears and plums. Drain pineapple, reserving 1/2 cup of juice. Lay pineapple over fruit in pan.

In a saucepan, combine the pineapple juice, brown sugar, butter, cinnamon and cloves. Cook and stir until sugar is dissolved and butter is melted. Pour over the fruit. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until mixture is heated through. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Breakfast Cookies

I like to give my family a hearty start in the morning, especially when they have to eat in a hurry. These easy-to-make "cookies" are perfect for breakfast on the run and really appeal to the kid in all of us.

—Wanda Cox, Roscommon, Michigan

- **2/3 cup butter, softened**
- **2/3 cup sugar**
- **1 egg, lightly beaten**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **3/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1-1/2 cups old-fashioned oats**
- **1/2 cup wheat germ**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **6 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add egg and vanilla; mix well. Combine flour, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in oats and wheat germ. Fold in cheese and bacon.

Drop by rounded teaspoonsful 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 15-17 minutes or until light brown. **Yield:** about 3 dozen.

Peach Breakfast Slush

(Pictured at left)

This refreshing beverage is a favorite of mine to serve at our many brunch get-togethers. Because it's made ahead of time, I can avoid the last-minute rush before my guests arrive.

—Karen Hamilton, Ludington, Michigan

- **1 can (16 ounces) sliced peaches, drained**
- **1 can (6 ounces) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed**
- **1-1/2 cups apricot nectar**
- **2 cups chilled lemon-lime soda**

In a blender, combine peaches, orange juice and nectar; blend until smooth. Pour into a freezer container; cover and freeze until firm. To serve, scoop 2/3 cup frozen mixture into a glass; add 1/3 cup soda. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Spiced Pears

(Pictured at left)

I try to serve a fruit dish with every breakfast to get some extra vitamins in our diet. Not only are these pears quick and easy to prepare, they're delicious!

—Sue Fisher, Northfield Falls, Vermont

- **1 can (16 ounces) pear halves**
- **1/3 cup packed brown sugar**
- **3/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon**

Drain the pears, reserving syrup; set the pears aside. Place the syrup, brown sugar, nutmeg and cinnamon in a saucepan. Bring to a boil.

Reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the pears and simmer about 5 minutes more or until heated through. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Lime Muffins

I bake muffins every Sunday morning, so I'm always trying different ingredients to make them interesting. These citrus muffins are my husband's favorite.

—Robin Christmas, Charlotte, North Carolina

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1 egg**
- **1/4 cup milk**
- **1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- **3 tablespoons lime juice**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons grated lime peel**

In a bowl, combine the first four ingredients. In another bowl, beat the egg, milk, oil, lime juice and peel. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fill paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake at 400° for 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. **Yield:** 1 dozen.

Breakfast Nut Roll

This is one of my favorite recipes that I have been making for years—I even won a prize for it years ago. It's special not only because it tastes so good, but because it was passed down to me by my dear aunt.

—Josephine Buss, Neenah, Wisconsin

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **3/4 cup cold butter**
- **1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- **1 teaspoon plus 1/2 cup sugar**
- **1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- **2 eggs, *separated***
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1/2 cup chopped walnuts**
- **Confectioners' sugar**

In a large bowl, combine flour and salt; cut in butter until crumbly; set aside. In a small bowl, dissolve yeast and 1 teaspoon sugar in warm water; let stand 10 minutes. Beat egg yolks; add to yeast mixture. Stir gently into flour mixture to form a smooth ball.

Divide dough in half; turn onto a floured surface. Roll each half into a 12-in. x 8-in. rectangle. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form; beat in remaining sugar 1 tablespoon at a time. Fold in vanilla. Spread onto each rectangle; sprinkle with nuts. Starting with short edge, roll up jelly-roll style. Pinch ends together. Place on a greased baking sheet. Cut a deep slit down center of each roll (do not cut through).

Immediately bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Dust with confectioners' sugar while warm. When cooled completely, slice diagonally. **Yield:** 2 rolls.

Blueberry Brunch Loaf

I like to make special breakfasts on the weekend for my husband and children. A sweet frosting makes this delicious blueberry bread even more tasty.

—Jean Nietert, Claremont, South Dakota

- **1/4 cup butter, softened**
- **3/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tablespoon grated orange peel**
- **2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 tablespoon baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 cup milk**
- **1/4 cup orange juice**
- **1 cup fresh *or* frozen blueberries***

GLAZE:

- **1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **2 teaspoons butter, softened**
- **1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel**
- **1 to 1-1/2 tablespoons milk**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and brown sugar. Stir in egg and orange peel. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with milk and juice, mixing thoroughly after each addition. Fold in blueberries. Pour into a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 50-55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack.

For glaze, combine sugar, butter and orange peel. Gradually add milk until glaze is of spreading consistency; drizzle over warm bread. Cool completely. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

***Editor's Note:** If using frozen blueberries, do not thaw before adding to the batter.

Mashed Potato Doughnuts

As a special treat in winter, my parents would make a double batch of these doughnuts to welcome us six kids home from school. This recipe from my great-aunt has been handed down through the generations. —Tammy Evans
Nepean, Ontario

Pecan Waffles

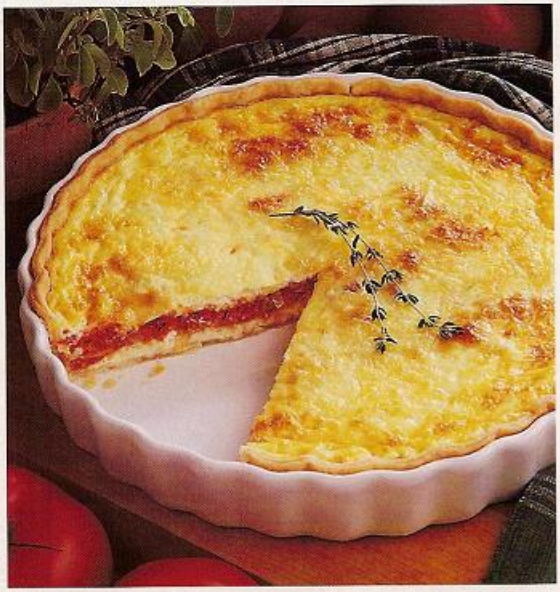
I've tried for years to duplicate a delicious waffle I ate at a restaurant chain here in the South. This is the closest I've come, and they're crisp and nutty. Butter and maple syrup are my family's favorite toppings. —Susan Jansen
Smyrna, Georgia

Crustless Swiss Quiche

I received this recipe from my mother-in-law, an all-around great cook. Everyone raves about her rich quiche when she serves it at card parties and other gatherings.
—Marlene Kole
Highland Heights, Ohio

French Banana Pancakes

These pancakes are a real breakfast favorite in our family. Even our daughters make them all by themselves when they have friends spend the night. Now their friends' mothers are asking for the recipe.
—Cheryl Sowers
Bakersfield, California



Tomato Quiche

(Pictured above)

I first tried this recipe at a family gathering and loved it! It is a great meatless brunch dish, served hot or cold. This is my most-requested dish for parties and a fairly simple one to make. Enjoy! —*Heidi Anne Quinn*
West Kingston, Rhode Island

- **1 cup chopped onion**
- **2 tablespoons butter**
- **4 large tomatoes, peeled, chopped, seeded and drained**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/4 teaspoon dried thyme**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese, *divided***
- **1 unbaked pastry shell (10 inches)**
- **4 eggs**
- **1-1/2 cups half-and-half cream**

In a skillet, saute onion in butter until tender. Add tomatoes, salt, pepper and thyme. Cook over medium-high heat until liquid is almost evaporated, about 10-15 minutes. Remove from heat.

Sprinkle 1 cup cheese into pastry shell. Cover with tomato mixture; sprinkle with remaining cheese. In a mixing bowl, beat eggs until foamy. Stir in half-and-half cream; mix well. Pour into pastry shell.

Bake at 425° for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 325°; bake 40 minutes more or until top begins to brown and a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Cranberry Kuchen

This German coffee cake has been served at family breakfasts for more than five generations. There is a recipe requested more by our large family.
—Linda Bright, Wichita, Kans

- **2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast**
- **1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- **1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- **1/4 cup butter, softened**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1 egg**
- **3-1/2 to 4 cups all-purpose flour**

CRANBERRY SAUCE:

- **2 cups water**
- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **4 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries**

EGG MIXTURE:

- **8 eggs**
- **3/4 cup evaporated milk**
- **3/4 cup sugar**

TOPPING:

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 cups sugar**
- **1 cup cold butter**

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, butter, sugar, salt, egg and 2 cups flour. Beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Do not knead. Cover; let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, in a saucepan, bring water and sugar to a boil. Add cranberries. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat; set aside.

In a bowl, combine the eggs, evaporated milk and sugar; beat well. Divide half of the egg mixture between two greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pans; set remaining egg mixture aside.

Punch dough down. Divide in half. Pat each portion onto egg mixture in pans. Spoon cranberry sauce over dough. Drizzle with remaining egg mixture.

For topping, combine flour and sugar in a bowl. Cut in butter until crumbly; sprinkle over the top. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes or until lightly browned. **Yield:** 2 kuchens.

Crustless Swiss Quiche

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 2-1/2 cups cottage cheese
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 9 eggs
- 2 packages (one 8 ounces, one 3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 3 cups (12 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Melt butter in a medium saucepan. Stir in flour; cook and stir until bubbly. Gradually add milk; cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sauce thickens. Remove from the heat; set aside to cool, about 15-20 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine cottage cheese, baking powder, salt and mustard; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs. Slowly add cream cheese, cottage cheese mixture and cream sauce. Fold in Swiss and Parmesan cheeses. Pour into two greased 10-in. pie plates. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes or until puffed and lightly browned. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 16-20 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

French Banana Pancakes

PANCAKES:
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

FILLING:
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 cup half-and-half cream
- 5 to 6 firm bananas, halved lengthwise

Whipped cream and additional cinnamon, optional

Sift flour and confectioners' sugar into a mixing bowl. Add milk, eggs, butter, vanilla and salt; beat until smooth. Heat a lightly greased 6-in. skillet; add about 3 tablespoons batter. Spread to a 6-in. circle. Cook over medium heat; turn when bubbles form on top. Cook until second side is golden brown. Stack pancakes between waxed paper. Repeat with remaining batter (makes 10-12 pancakes), greasing skillet as needed.

For filling, melt butter in a large skillet. Stir in brown sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. Stir in cream and cook until slightly thickened. Add half of the bananas at a time to skillet; heat for 2-3 minutes, spooning sauce over them. Remove from the heat. Roll a pancake around each banana half and place on a serving platter. Spoon sauce over pancakes. Top with whipped cream and a dash of cinnamon if desired. **Yield:** 5-6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Mashed Potato Doughnuts

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 1 cup warm buttermilk (110° to 115°)*
- 3 cups sugar, *divided*
- 3 eggs
- 1-1/2 cups warm mashed potatoes (without added milk *or* butter)
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- 6 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Oil for deep-fat frying

- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm buttermilk. Add 2 cups sugar and eggs; beat well. Add potatoes and butter; mix well. Add flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and nutmeg; mix well. Do not knead. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours.

Turn onto a floured surface; divide into fourths. Roll each portion to 1/2-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 3-in. doughnut cutter. In an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer, heat oil to 375°. Fry doughnuts, a few at a time, until golden brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels. Combine remaining sugar and cinnamon; roll doughnuts in cinnamon-sugar while warm. **Yield:** about 2 dozen.

***Editor's Note:** Warmed buttermilk will appear curdled.

Pecan Waffles

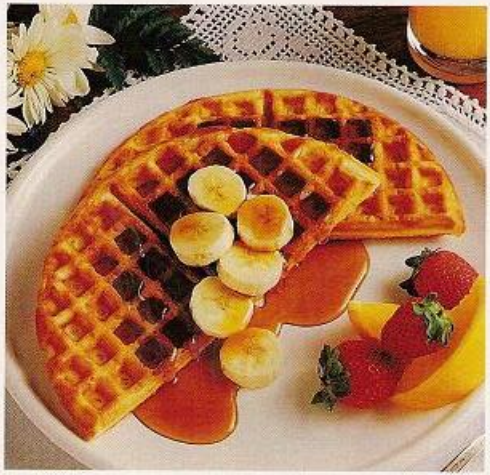
- 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs, *separated*
- 1-3/4 cups milk
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Maple syrup

In a bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Combine egg yolks, milk and oil; stir into dry ingredients. Beat egg whites until stiff; fold into batter.

Sprinkle hot waffle iron with 2 tablespoons pecans. Pour 1/4 to 1/3 cup of batter over pecans and bake according to manufacturer's directions until golden brown. Repeat with remaining pecans and batter. Serve with syrup. **Yield:** 8-10 waffles (4-1/2 inches).

Dutch Cream Waffles



These waffles were originally made by my grandmother in a waffle iron on a wood-burning stove. The crispy golden waffles are special to me because I served them to my husband the first night I cooked in our new home.

—Barbara Syme
Peoria, Arizona

Baked Stuffed Eggs

Lucky for me, the man I married was patient. As a young bride, I could hardly boil water! (Now, many years later, he and I have three grown daughters and six grandchildren.) This make-ahead egg dish is wonderful for potlucks.

—Lorraine Bylsma
Eustis, Florida

Vegetable Frittata

This easy egg dish speeds up meal-making time. It's ready in less than half an hour. *—Janet Eckhoff*
Woodland, California

Oat Pancakes

My daughter brought this recipe home from school one day, and we loved it. Since then, these pancakes have been a regular part of Sunday morning breakfast, served with maple syrup, flavored syrup or applesauce and a big helping of grits.

—Linda Hicks
Pinconning, Michigan

Vegetable Frittata

- **1/2 cup chopped onion**
- **1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
- **1/2 cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **3 tablespoons olive oil, *divided***
- **2 medium red potatoes, cooked and cubed**
- **1 small zucchini, cubed**
- **6 eggs**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **Pinch pepper**

In a 10-in. cast-iron or ovenproof skillet, saute onion, peppers and garlic in 2 tablespoons of oil until the vegetables are tender. Remove vegetables with a slotted spoon; set aside. In the same skillet over medium heat, lightly brown potatoes in remaining oil. Add vegetable mixture and zucchini; simmer for 4 minutes.

In a bowl, beat eggs, salt and pepper; pour over vegetables. Cover and cook for 8-10 minutes or until eggs are nearly set. Broil 6 in. from the heat for 2 minutes or until eggs are set on top. Cut into wedges. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Oat Pancakes

- **1 cup quick-cooking oats**
- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **2 tablespoons sugar**
- **2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **1-1/2 cups milk**
- **1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- **1 teaspoon lemon juice**

Combine oats, flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in a mixing bowl. Make a well in the center. Combine egg, milk, oil and lemon juice; pour into well and stir just until moistened.

Pour batter by 1/4 cupfuls onto a lightly greased hot griddle; turn when bubbles form on top of pancakes. Cook until second side is golden brown. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Dutch Cream Waffles

- **1 cup all-purpose flour**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **3 eggs, *separated***
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **Maple syrup**
- **Fresh fruit**

In a large mixing bowl, combine flour and salt. In a small mixing bowl, beat egg yolks on low while adding cream. Beat for 1 minute. Add to flour mixture; blend on low speed, then beat on medium-high until smooth.

In another small mixing bowl, beat egg whites on high until stiff but not dry. Gently fold into batter. Bake in a preheated waffle iron according to manufacturer's directions. Serve with warm maple syrup or fresh fruit. **Yield:** 2-3 servings.

Baked Stuffed Eggs

STUFFED EGGS:

- **8 hard-cooked eggs**
- **3 to 4 tablespoons sour cream**
- **2 teaspoons prepared mustard**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**

SAUCE:

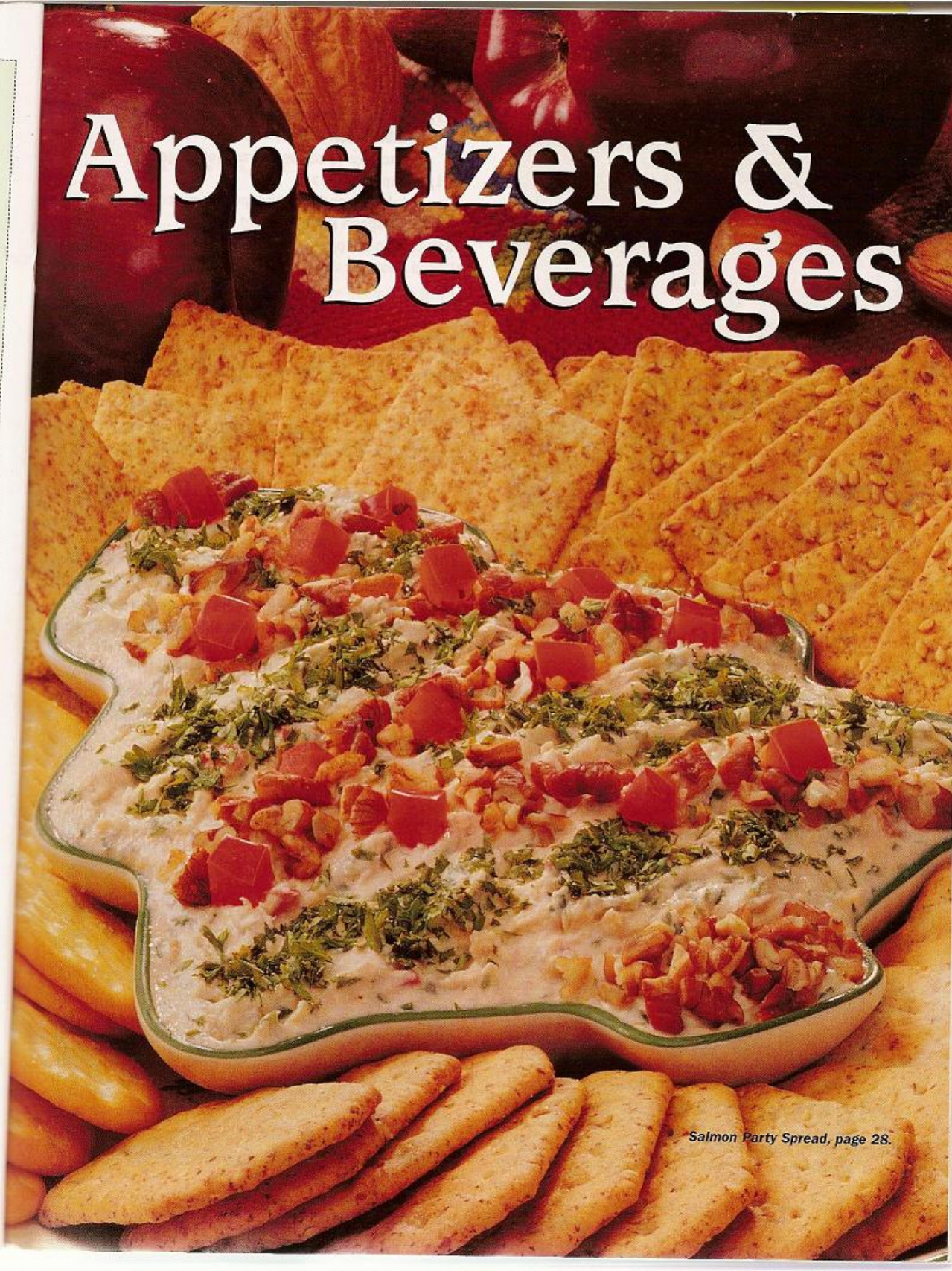
- **1/2 cup chopped onion**
- **2 tablespoons butter**
- **1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- **1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- **1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese**
- **1/2 teaspoon paprika**

Slice eggs in half lengthwise; remove yolks and set whites aside. In a bowl, mash yolks with a fork. Add sour cream, mustard and salt; mix well. Fill the egg whites; set aside.

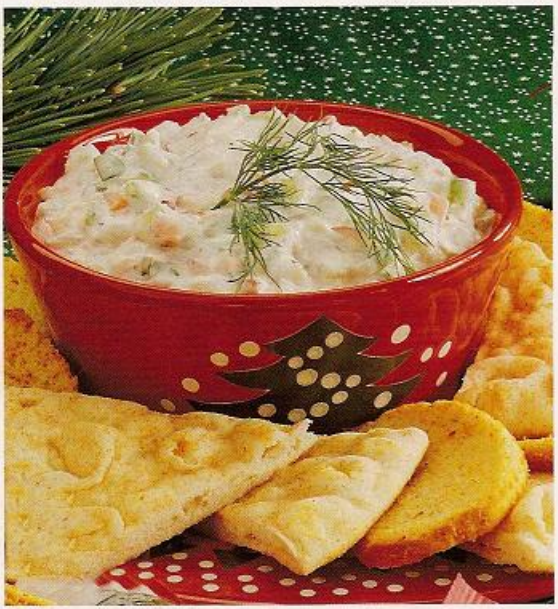
In a saucepan, saute onion in butter until tender. Add soup and sour cream; mix well. Pour half into an ungreased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Arrange stuffed eggs over the sauce. Spoon remaining sauce on top. Sprinkle with cheese and paprika. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until heated through. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Appetizers & Beverages



Salmon Party Spread, page 28.



Garden Vegetable Spread

(Pictured above)

For a tempting dip or spread, try this fresh-tasting version. It's chock-full of crunchy garden vegetables.
—Jan Woodall, Cadiz, Kentucky

- **1 carton (8 ounces) fat-free spreadable cream cheese**
- **1/2 cup finely chopped green pepper**
- **2 celery ribs, finely chopped**
- **2 medium carrots, finely chopped**
- **6 radishes, finely chopped**
- **4 teaspoons finely chopped onion**
- **1 teaspoon dill weed**
- **Snack toast *and/or* pita bread**

In a bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Serve on snack toast and/or pita bread. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 3 cups.

Mushroom Liver Pate

It's easy to make this smooth, zippy spread, and it tastes oh, so good! —Linda Rock, Stratford, Wisconsin

- **1/4 pound fresh mushrooms, finely chopped**
- **1 tablespoon butter**
- **1 package (8 ounces) braunschweiger**
- **1/2 cup sour cream**
- **1 tablespoon finely chopped green onion**
- **1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard**
- **Dash cayenne pepper**
- **Minced fresh parsley**

In a skillet, saute mushrooms in butter until tender. Remove from the heat. Stir in the braunschweiger, sour cream, onion, mustard and cayenne; mix well. Press into a 1-1/2-cup bowl lined with plastic wrap. Cover and refrigerate until serving. Invert onto a plate; garnish with parsley. **Yield:** 1-1/2 cups.

Salmon Party Spread

(Pictured on page 27)

This recipe deliciously showcases our state's flavorful salmon. Guests love it! —Kathy Crow, Cordova, Alaska

- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **1 can (7-1/2 ounces) pink salmon, drained, flaked and cartilage removed**
- **3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley**
- **2 tablespoons finely chopped green pepper**
- **2 tablespoons finely chopped sweet red pepper**
- **2 teaspoons grated onion**
- **1 teaspoon lemon juice**
- **1 teaspoon prepared horseradish**
- **1/2 teaspoon Liquid Smoke**
- **Finely chopped pecans *or* additional parsley**
- **Crackers**

In a bowl, combine the first nine ingredients; stir until well blended. Cover and chill for 2 to 24 hours. Transfer to a serving bowl; sprinkle with pecans or parsley. Serve with crackers. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 2 cups.

Partial to Parsley

Thoroughly wash fresh parsley and shake off any excess moisture. Then wrap it in paper towels and store in a plastic bag for up to 1 week. To revive wilted parsley, cut off 1/2 in. from the stem and stand the parsley in a glass of ice water. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Bacon-Cheese Appetizer Pie

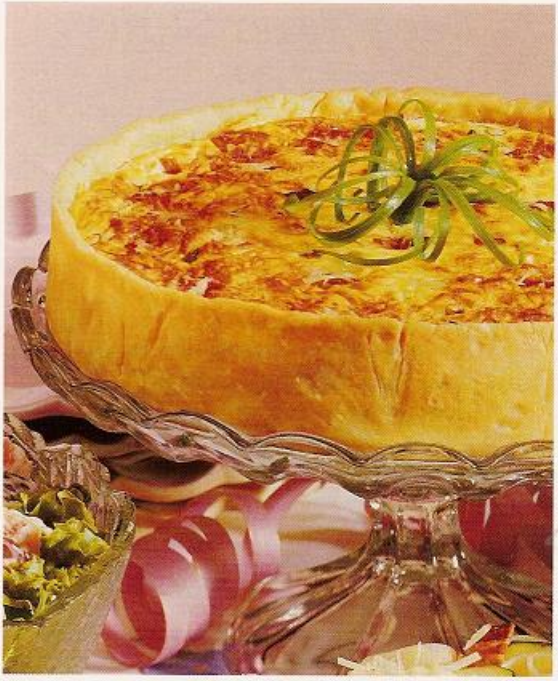
(Pictured at right)

I first made this for an open house years ago and everybody liked it. It's very easy to make and tastes delicious. It's fun to have cheesecake for an appetizer instead of dessert for a change. —*Joanie Elbourn*
Gardner, Massachusetts

Pastry for a single-crust pie
3 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
4 eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 cup milk
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese
1/2 cup sliced green onions
6 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Roll the pastry into a 13-1/2-in. circle. Fit into the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 9-in. springform pan. Lightly prick the bottom. Bake at 450° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool slightly.

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Add eggs and milk; beat until smooth. Add cheese, onions, bacon, salt, pepper and cayenne; mix well. Pour into the crust. Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool 20 minutes. Remove sides of pan. Cut into thin slices; serve warm. **Yield:** 16-20 appetizer servings.



Pecan-Date Cheese Ball

(Pictured below left)

This lightly sweet cheese ball is great to have on hand when we crave something creamy or if company drops by. It's even nice enough for the holidays. —*Sue Broyles*
Cherokee, Texas

1 teaspoon ground mustard
1 teaspoon water
2 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup chopped dates
1 cup chopped pecans
Crackers

In a small bowl, dissolve the mustard in water; let stand for 10 minutes. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and mayonnaise until smooth. Add nutmeg and mustard mixture. Stir in cheddar cheese and dates. Chill for 15 minutes. Shape into a ball; roll in pecans. Chill. Serve with crackers. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 3-1/2 cups (4-in. ball).

Taco Tater Skins

(Pictured below)

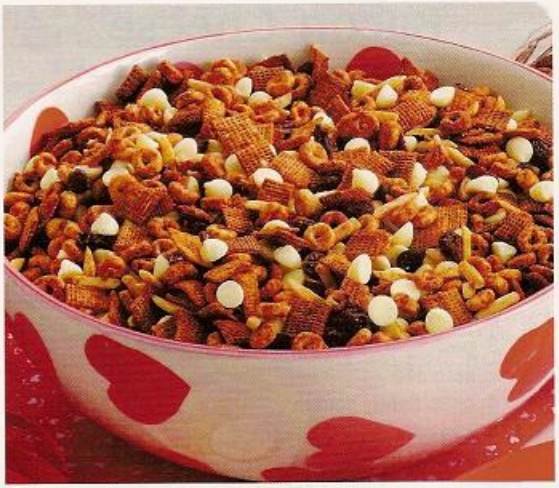
The idea for my recipe started with a food demonstration I didn't like. That version used things most people don't have on hand. So I decided to experiment, and out came Taco Tater Skins. They're great for parties.

—Phyllis Douglas, Fairview, Michigan

- **6 large russet potatoes**
- **1/2 cup butter, melted**
- **2 tablespoons taco seasoning**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **15 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- **3 green onions, chopped**
- **Salsa *and/or* sour cream, optional**

Bake potatoes at 375° for 1 hour or until tender. Reduce heat to 350°. When cool enough to handle, cut the potatoes lengthwise into quarters. Scoop out pulp, leaving a 1/4-in. shell (save pulp for another use).

Combine the butter and taco seasoning; brush over both sides of potato skins. Place skin side down on a greased baking sheet. Sprinkle with cheese, bacon and onions. Bake for 5-10 minutes or until the cheese is melted. Serve with salsa and/or sour cream if desired. **Yield:** 2 dozen.



Cocoa Munch Mix

(Pictured above)

This sweet snack is a nice change of pace from the typical cookies and brownies found at bake sales. Packed in resealable bags, the mix always goes fast. It's great for the holidays, too. *—Amanda Denton, Barre, Vermont*

- **4 cups Cheerios**
- **4 cups Chex cereal**
- **1 cup slivered almonds**
- **2 tablespoons baking cocoa**
- **2 tablespoons sugar**
- **1/2 cup butter, melted**
- **1 cup raisins**
- **1 package (12 ounces) vanilla *or* white chips**

In a large bowl, combine the cereals and almonds. In a small bowl, combine cocoa, sugar and butter. Pour over cereal mixture and toss to coat. Pour into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 250° for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes. Cool completely. Stir in raisins and chips. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 10 servings.

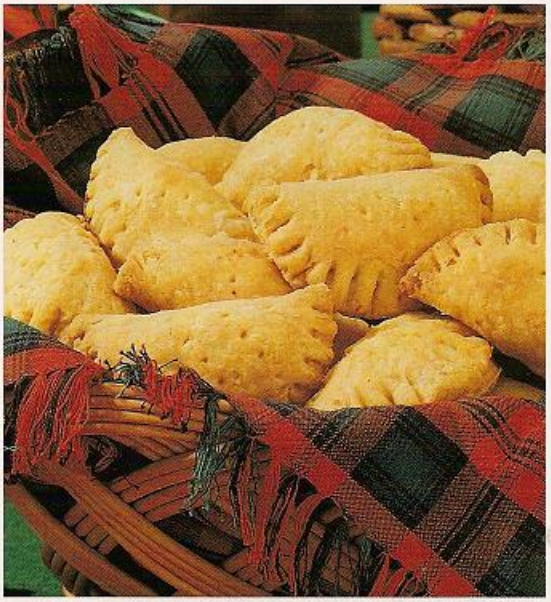
Roasted Mixed Nuts

It's impossible to stop eating these savory nuts once you start. We love to munch on them as an evening snack.

—Carolyn Zimmerman, Fairbury, Illinois

1 pound mixed nuts
1/4 cup maple syrup
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix

In a bowl, combine the nuts and maple syrup; mix well. Sprinkle with brown sugar and salad dressing mix; stir gently to coat. Spread in a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 300° for 20-25 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool completely. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 3 cups.



Mini Chicken Turnovers

(Pictured above right)

I've been making these hearty tiny turnovers for several years. They take a little extra time to assemble, but it's worth it since they taste so special.
—Mary Detweiler, West Farmington, Ohio

FILLING:
3 tablespoons chopped onion
3 tablespoons butter
1-3/4 cups shredded cooked chicken
3 tablespoons chicken broth
1/4 teaspoon *each* garlic salt, poultry seasoning and pepper
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, cubed

PASTRY:
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/2 cup cold butter
4 to 5 tablespoons cold water

In a large skillet, saute onion in butter until tender. Stir in chicken, broth, seasonings and cream cheese; set aside. In a bowl, combine flour, salt and paprika; cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Gradually add water, tossing with a fork until a ball forms.

On a floured surface, roll out pastry to 1/16-in. thickness. Cut with a 2-1/2-in. round cookie cutter. Reroll scraps and cut more circles. Mound a heaping teaspoon of filling on half of each circle. Moisten edges with water; fold pastry over filling and press edges with a fork to seal. Place on ungreased baking sheets. Repeat with remaining pastry and filling. Prick tops with a fork.

Bake at 375° for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. **Yield:** about 2-1/2 dozen.

Editor's Note: Turnovers can be baked, frozen and reheated at 375° for 5-7 minutes.

Mock Champagne Punch

Of all the punch recipes I've tried, I keep coming back to this pretty, nonalcoholic one. *—Betty Claycomb*
Alverton, Pennsylvania

1 quart white grape juice, chilled
1 quart ginger ale, chilled
Strawberries or raspberries

Combine grape juice and ginger ale; pour into a punch bowl or glasses. Garnish with berries. **Yield:** 16 (1/2-cup) servings.

Party Pointer

Keep a notebook or journal of the dates you entertained as well as the names of guests and what foods and decorations they liked most!

Clockwise from top right: Ruby-Red Pretzel Dip, Southwestern Star Dip and Christmas Cheese Ball.

Southwestern Star Dip

(Pictured at left)

I enjoyed this sensational dip at a holiday party and begged for the recipe. —*Joan Hallford*
North Richland Hills, Texas

2 cups (8 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1 cup mayonnaise*
1 can (4-1/2 ounces) chopped ripe olives, drained, *divided*
1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies, undrained
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/8 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
1 medium tomato, chopped
1/4 cup chopped green onions
Tortilla chips

In a bowl, combine cheese, mayonnaise, 1/3 cup olives, chilies, garlic powder and hot pepper sauce. Transfer to an ungreased 9-in. pie plate.

Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20 minutes or until hot and bubbly. Sprinkle tomato on top in the shape of a star; outline with remaining olives. Sprinkle onions around the star. Serve with tortilla chips. **Yield:** 2-2/3 cups.

***Editor's Note:** Reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise is not recommended for this recipe.

Ruby-Red Pretzel Dip

(Pictured at left)

Plain pretzels get a pretty coating and tangy taste from this thick, festive blend. —*Grace Yaskovic*
Branchville, New Jersey

1 can (16 ounces) jellied cranberry sauce
3/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup vinegar
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground mustard
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon cold water
Red food coloring, optional
Pretzels

In a saucepan, combine the cranberry sauce, sugar, vinegar, ginger, mustard, cinnamon and pepper; whisk over medium heat until smooth. Combine flour and cold water until smooth; add to cranberry mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes.

Transfer to a bowl; stir in food coloring if desired. Cover and chill overnight. Serve with pretzels. **Yield:** 2 cups.

Christmas Cheese Ball

(Pictured at left)

This rich cheese spread is delicious and wonderfully attractive. —*Esther Shank, Harrisonville, Virginia*

2 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
1 tablespoon diced pimientos
1 tablespoon diced green pepper
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon lemon juice
Chopped pecans, toasted
Assorted crackers

In a mixing bowl, combine cream cheese, cheddar cheese, onion, pimientos, green pepper, Worcestershire sauce and lemon juice; mix well.

Shape into two balls; roll in pecans. Cover and chill. Remove from the refrigerator 15 minutes before serving. Serve with crackers. **Yield:** 2 cheese balls (1-1/2 cups each).

'Spice' to Know

- Ground spices quickly lose their aroma and flavor, so buy them in small quantities.
- Store spices in airtight containers in a cool, dark place for no more than 6 months. Do not store them over a stovetop or other hot location.
- Note your date of purchase on the spice bottle to keep track of how old it is.
- Make finding spices easier by alphabetizing them.
- Whole spices (such as allspice, cloves and nutmeg) can be ground fresh, but they'll have more punch than preground spices.

Stuffed Apricot French Toast

(Pictured below)

In our family, this special recipe is often served for our Christmas Day brunch. I was always looking for something unique to serve, and this rich, colorful dish certainly fills the bill. It tastes so good! —Deb Leland
Three Rivers, Michigan

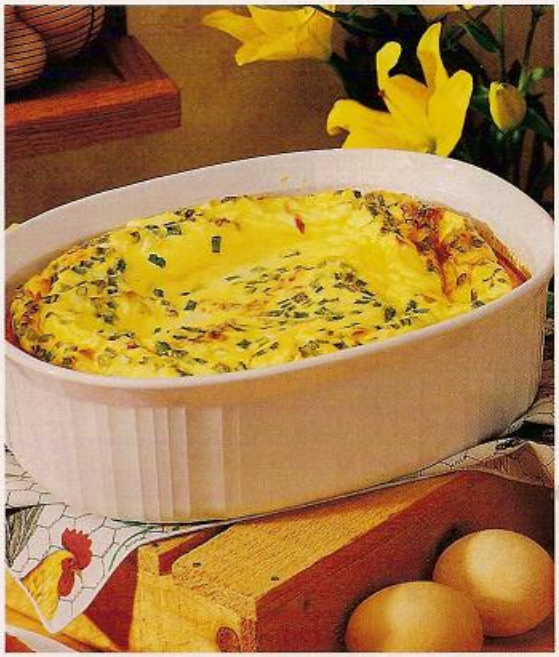
- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract, *divided***
- **1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts**
- **1 loaf (1-1/2 pounds) French bread**
- **4 eggs**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **1 jar (12 ounces) apricot preserves**
- **1/2 cup orange juice**

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and 1 teaspoon vanilla until fluffy. Stir in nuts; set aside.

Cut bread into 1-1/2-in. slices; cut a pocket in the top of each slice. Fill each pocket with about 2 tablespoons of cream cheese mixture.

In another bowl, beat eggs, cream, nutmeg and remaining vanilla. Dip both sides of bread into egg mixture, being careful not to squeeze out the filling. Cook on a lightly greased griddle until golden brown on both sides. Place on an ungreased baking sheet; bake at 300° for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine preserves and orange juice in a small saucepan; heat through. Drizzle over hot French toast. **Yield:** about 8 servings.



Bacon and Eggs Casserole

(Pictured above)

Because it requires so little time to prepare and is such a great hit with family and friends alike, this is a favorite of mine to make for brunches. Served with a fruit salad, hot muffins and croissants, it's excellent for an after-church brunch. —Deanna Durward-Orr
Windsor, Ontario

- **4 bacon strips**
- **18 eggs**
- **1 cup milk**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- **1/4 cup sliced green onions**
- **1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**

In a skillet over medium heat, cook bacon until crisp; drain. In a large bowl, beat eggs. Add milk, cheese, sour cream, onions, salt and pepper. Pour into a greased 3-qt. baking dish. Crumble bacon and sprinkle on top.

Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 40-45 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 5 minutes. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Creamy Caramel Dip

(Pictured above)

Because I feed three hungry "men" (my husband, a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and our two boys), I love satisfying snacks that are easy to make like this dip. I modified a friend's recipe. We sure appreciate this cool, light treat. —Karen Laubman, Spruce Grove, Alberta

- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **3/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- **2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- **2 teaspoons lemon juice**
- **1 cup cold milk**
- **1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix**
- **Assorted fresh fruit**

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and brown sugar until smooth. Add the sour cream, vanilla, lemon juice, milk and pudding mix, beating well after each addition. Cover and chill for at least 1 hour. Serve with fruit. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 3-1/2 cups.

Layered Shrimp Dip

(Pictured at right)

People's eyes light up when I set this special snack on the table. It has a terrific combination of flavors and looks so pretty. —Sue Broyles, Cherokee, Texas

- **1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **6 tablespoons salsa, *divided***
- **1/2 cup seafood sauce**
- **3 cans (6 ounces *each*) small shrimp, rinsed and drained**
- **1 can (2-1/4 ounces) sliced ripe olives, drained**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese**
- **Sliced green onions**
- **Tortilla chips**

Combine cream cheese and 3 tablespoons salsa; spread into an ungreased 9-in. pie plate. Combine seafood sauce and remaining salsa; spread over cream cheese. Place shrimp evenly over top. Sprinkle with olives. Combine cheeses; sprinkle over olives. Top with onions. Chill. Serve with tortilla chips. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Microwave Snack Mix

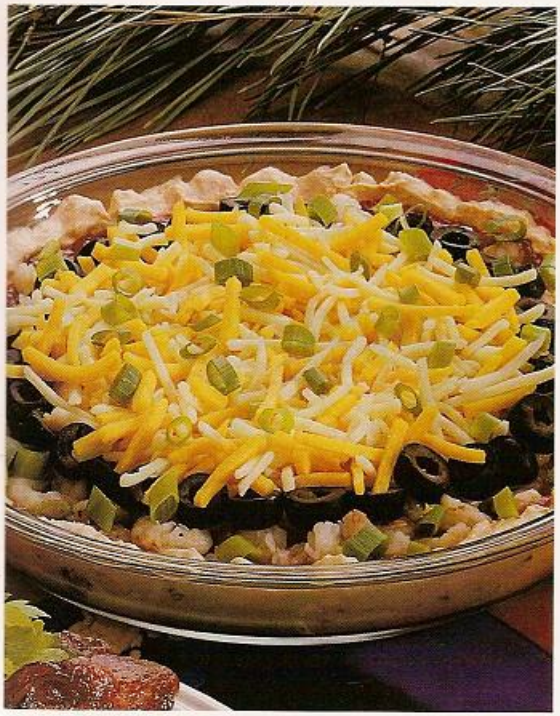
I zap this fun snack in my microwave. The peanuts and pretzels come out so crisp you'd think they were baked. —*Priscilla Weaver, Hagerstown, Maryland*

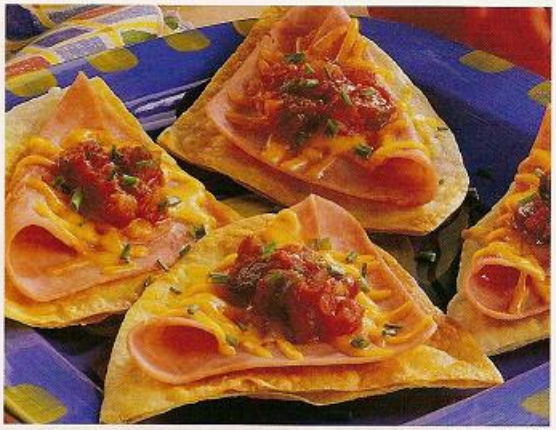
1/2 cup butter
2 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
5 cups oyster crackers
3 cups miniature pretzels
2-1/2 cups salted peanuts
2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese

In a small microwave-safe bowl, combine butter, chili powder, cumin and garlic powder. Cover and microwave on high for 45-60 seconds or until butter is melted.

In a 3-qt. microwave-safe dish, combine crackers, pretzels and peanuts. Add butter mixture and mix lightly. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and toss to coat. Microwave, uncovered, on high for 7-8 minutes or until mixture begins to toast, carefully stirring every 2 minutes. Cool completely. Store in an airtight container. **Yield:** 10 cups.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 700-watt microwave.





Ham 'n' Cheese Tortillas

(Pictured above)

My family eats these tasty tortillas as fast as I can make them. Good thing they can be made in a hurry! They're a new and flavorful way to serve ham and cheese.
—*Jamie Whitaker, Aurora, Missouri*

Vegetable oil for frying
6 flour tortillas (10 inches), quartered
3 packages (6 ounces *each*) boiled ham (24 slices)
4-1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup picante sauce *or* salsa
Garlic salt
Sour cream and minced chives, optional

In an electric skillet, heat 2 in. of oil to 375°. Fry tortilla wedges, a few at a time, until lightly browned and crispy. Drain on paper towels. Place wedges in a single layer on baking sheets.

Top each with a folded ham slice, 3 tablespoons cheese and 2 teaspoons picante sauce. Sprinkle with garlic salt. Broil 4-6 in. from the heat until cheese is melted, about 2 minutes. Serve warm. If desired, top with a dollop of sour cream and sprinkle with chives. **Yield:** 2 dozen.

Baked Tortilla Chips

You can also brush tortillas with olive oil, season to taste with salt and pepper and cut into wedges. Arrange wedges in a single layer on lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 5-10 minutes or until crisp. Cool on paper towels.

Cranberry Apple Cider

(Pictured above)

I love to start this soothing cider in the slow cooker on nights before my husband goes hunting. Then he can fill his thermos and take it with him out into the cold. The cider has a terrific fruit flavor we both enjoy.

—Jennifer Naboka, North Plainfield, New Jersey

- **4 cups water**
- **4 cups apple juice**
- **1 can (12 ounces) frozen apple juice concentrate, thawed**
- **1 medium apple, peeled and sliced**
- **1 cup fresh *or* frozen cranberries**
- **1 medium orange, peeled and sectioned**
- **1 cinnamon stick**

In a slow cooker, combine all ingredients; mix well. Cover and cook on low for 2 hours or until cider reaches desired temperature. Discard cinnamon stick. If desired, remove fruit with a slotted spoon before serving. **Yield:** 10 servings (about 2-1/2 quarts).

Creamy Horseradish Dip

In this simple-to-prepare vegetable dip, horseradish shines through without being too overpowering.

—Barbara Coleman, Dunbar, West Virginia

- **1 cup mayonnaise**
- **2 tablespoons prepared horseradish**
- **1 teaspoon white wine vinegar**
- **1/2 teaspoon curry powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon garlic salt *or* 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground mustard**
- **Assorted fresh vegetables**

In a bowl, combine the mayonnaise, horseradish, vinegar, curry, garlic salt and mustard. Cover and chill for at least 1 hour. Serve with vegetables. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** about 1 cup.

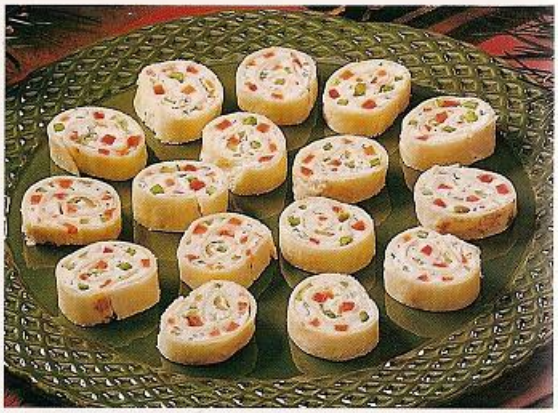
Christmas Party Pinwheels

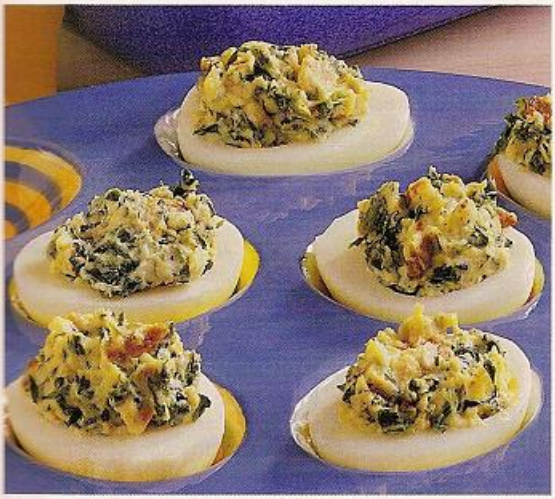
(Pictured below)

These festive appetizers look so special and pretty that folks can't resist them! The refreshing flavor of ranch dressing and crisp colorful vegetables make these pinwheels a pleasure to serve to holiday guests.

—Janis Plourde, Smooth Rock Falls, Ontario

- **2 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened**
- **1 envelope ranch salad dressing mix**
- **1/2 cup minced sweet red pepper**
- **1/2 cup minced celery**
- **1/4 cup sliced green onions**
- **1/4 cup sliced stuffed olives**
- **3 to 4 flour tortillas (10 inches)**





In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and salad dressing mix until smooth. Add red pepper, celery, onions and olives; mix well. Spread about 3/4 cup on each tortilla. Roll up tightly; wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Slice into 1/2-in. pieces. **Yield:** 15-20 servings.

Spinach Deviled Eggs

(Pictured above)

Spinach adds unexpected color and flavor to this tasty variation on deviled eggs. They're easy to make with leftover eggs and an attractive addition to a party spread. *—Dorothy Sander, Evansville, Indiana*

- **12 hard-cooked eggs**
- **1/4 cup mayonnaise**
- **2 tablespoons vinegar**
- **2 tablespoons butter, softened**
- **1 tablespoon sugar**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 cup frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry**
- **4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**

Slice eggs in half lengthwise; remove yolks and set whites aside. In a small bowl, mash yolks with a fork. Stir in the mayonnaise, vinegar, butter, sugar, pepper and salt. Add spinach and mix well. Stir in the bacon; spoon into egg whites. Serve immediately. **Yield:** 2 dozen.

Homemade Eggnog

(Pictured below)

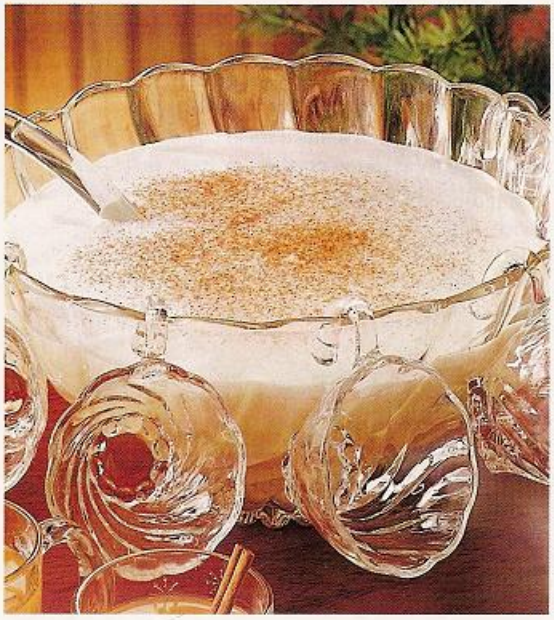
After just one taste, folks will know this holiday treat is homemade, not a store-bought variety. *—Pat Waymire, Yellow Springs, Ohio*

- **12 eggs**
- **1-1/2 cups sugar**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **2 quarts milk, *divided***
- **2 tablespoons vanilla extract**
- **1 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **2 cups heavy whipping cream**
- **Additional nutmeg, optional**

In a heavy 4-qt. saucepan, whisk together eggs, sugar and salt. Gradually add 1 qt. of milk. Cook and stir over low heat until a thermometer reads 160°-170°, about 30-35 minutes. Pour into a large heatproof bowl; stir in vanilla, nutmeg and remaining milk. Place bowl in an ice-water bath, stirring frequently until mixture is cool. If mixture separates, process in a blender until smooth. Cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours.

When ready to serve, beat the cream in a mixing bowl on high until soft peaks form; whisk gently into cooled milk mixture. Pour into a chilled 5-qt. punch bowl. Sprinkle with nutmeg if desired. **Yield:** 3-1/2 quarts.

Editor's Note: Eggnog may be stored, covered, in the refrigerator for several days. Whisk gently before serving.



Festive Apple-Cheese Log

With apples, pecans and cinnamon, this fun spread tastes almost like dessert. —*Anna Mayer*
Fort Branch, Indiana

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup finely chopped tart apple
1/4 cup chopped pecans
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
Additional chopped pecans, toasted
Vanilla wafers, sugar cookies *or* assorted crackers

In a bowl, combine cream cheese, apple, pecans and cinnamon. Shape into a log; roll in toasted pecans. Cover and refrigerate. Remove from the refrigerator 20 minutes before serving. Serve with vanilla wafers, cookies or crackers. **Yield:** 1 cheese log.

Fiesta Crab Dip

This mild, fresh-tasting crab dip tempts taste buds with a hint of picante. —*Patricia Walls, Aurora, Minnesota*

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1 cup picante sauce
1 package (8 ounces) imitation crabmeat, chopped
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
1/3 cup thinly sliced green onions
2 *tablespoons sliced ripe olives*
2 tablespoons diced fresh tomato
2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro
Tortilla chips, assorted crackers *or* fresh vegetables

In a mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese and picante sauce. Add crab, cheese and onions; mix well. Cover and refrigerate. Transfer to a serving bowl. Sprinkle with olives, tomato and cilantro. Serve with chips, crackers or vegetables. **Yield:** 3 cups.

Victorian Iced Tea

Pretty and refreshing, this flavored iced tea is well-received at any special gathering. —*Robin Fuhrman*
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

4 individual tea bags
4 cups boiling water
1 can (11-1/2 ounces) frozen cranberry-raspberry juice concentrate, thawed
4 cups cold water
Ice cubes and fresh mint

Place tea bags in a teapot; add boiling water. Cover and steep for 5 minutes. Remove and discard tea bags. Refrigerate tea in a covered container.

Just before serving, combine cranberry-raspberry concentrate and cold water in a 2-1/2-qt. pitcher; stir in tea. Serve on ice. Garnish with mint. **Yield:** 10 (1-cup) servings.

Four-Cheese Pate

This impressive and festive-looking cheese spread is simple to put together and never fails to get raves at parties. —*Jeanne Messina, Darien, Connecticut*

3 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened, *divided*
2 tablespoons milk
2 tablespoons sour cream
3/4 cup chopped pecans
4 ounces Brie *or* Camembert, rind removed, softened
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese
4 ounces crumbled blue cheese
1/2 cup pecan halves
Red and green apple slices *or* crackers

In a mixing bowl, beat one package of cream cheese with milk and sour cream until smooth. Spread into a 9-in. pie plate lined with plastic wrap. Sprinkle with chopped pecans.

In a mixing bowl, beat Brie, Swiss, blue cheese and remaining cream cheese until thoroughly combined. Gently spread over chopped pecans, smoothing the top to form a flat surface. Cover and chill overnight or up to 3-4 days.

Before serving, invert onto a plate and remove plastic wrap. Arrange pecan halves on top. Serve with apples or crackers. **Yield:** 16-20 servings.

Hard-Cooking Eggs

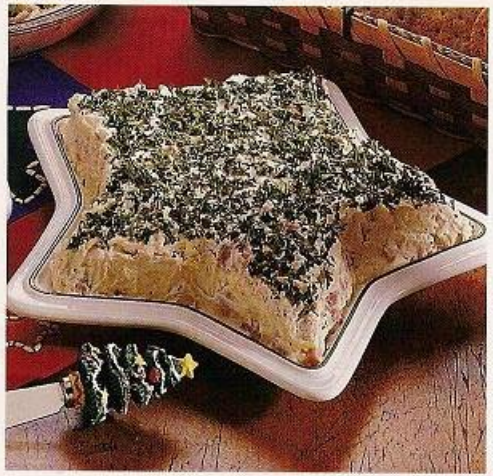
To cook eggs in their shells, place them in a single layer in a saucepan and cover with at least 1 in. of water. Cover and bring to a boil; remove from heat and let stand in the water for 15-17 minutes. Drain off hot water and immediately cover with cold water until completely cooled.

Mocha Punch

I first tried this smooth, creamy punch at a friend's Christmas open house. It was so special and distinctive I didn't leave until I had the recipe. Having a frosty glass of this chocolate punch is almost like sipping a chocolate shake.
—Yvonne Hatfield
Norman, Oklahoma

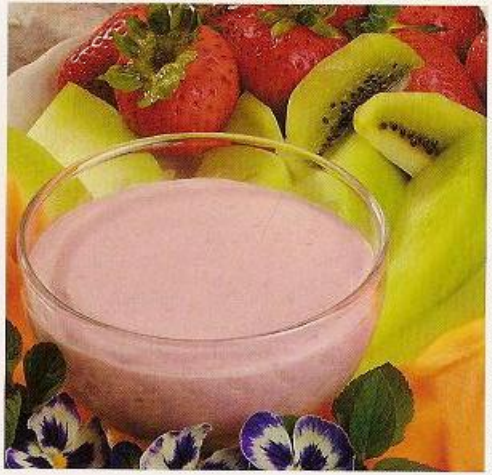
Festive Ham 'n' Cheese Spread

My family goes wild over this mild-tasting, hearty cheese spread on all sorts of crackers. —Cara Flora
Olathe, Colorado



Strawberry Fruit Dip

I got this recipe from my husband's cousin. It's a refreshing treat that reminds us of the warm summer months. —Lydia Graf
Norton, Ohio



Chicken Salad Puffs

Stuffed with chicken salad, these pretty golden puffs are perfect for a buffet. Folks seem to enjoy the subtle sweetness from the pineapple and the crunch of the celery and pecans.
—Lola Pullen
Lakeland, Florida

Strawberry Fruit Dip

1 cup sliced fresh strawberries
1/4 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
Assorted fresh fruit

In a blender, combine the strawberries, sour cream, sugar and vanilla. Cover and process until smooth. In a small mixing bowl, beat cream until stiff peaks form. Fold into strawberry mixture. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour. Serve with fruit. Refrigerate leftovers. **Yield:** 1-1/2 cups.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Chicken Salad Puffs

1 cup water
1/2 cup butter
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup all-purpose flour
4 eggs
FILLING:
2 cups finely chopped cooked chicken
1 can (8 ounces) crushed pineapple, drained
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup chopped celery
1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions
1/4 cup chopped pecans
2 tablespoons sweet pickle relish
1/4 teaspoon onion salt
1/4 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 teaspoon paprika
Salt and pepper to taste

In a saucepan, bring water, butter and salt to a boil. Add flour all at once and stir until a smooth ball forms. Remove from the heat; let stand for 5 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Continue beating until smooth and shiny.

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto a greased baking sheet. Bake at 400° for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks. Immediately cut a slit in each puff to allow steam to escape; cool. Split puffs and set tops aside; remove soft dough from inside.

In a bowl, combine all of the filling ingredients and mix well. Fill the puffs and replace the tops. Refrigerate until serving. Refrigerate any leftovers. **Yield:** about 3-1/2 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Mocha Punch

1-1/2 quarts water
1/2 cup instant chocolate drink mix
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup instant coffee granules
1/2 gallon vanilla ice cream
1/2 gallon chocolate ice cream
1 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped
Chocolate curls, optional

In a large saucepan, bring water to a boil. Remove from the heat. Add drink mix, sugar and coffee; stir until dissolved. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight.

About 30 minutes before serving, pour into a punch bowl. Add ice cream by scoopfuls; stir until partially melted. Garnish with dollops of whipped cream and chocolate curls if desired. **Yield:** 20-25 servings (about 5 quarts).

Festive Ham 'n' Cheese Spread

2 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup sour cream
2 tablespoons dry onion soup mix
1 cup chopped fully cooked ham
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Swiss *or* cheddar cheese
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, sour cream and soup mix until smooth. Stir in ham and cheese. Form into a ball or spoon into a plastic wrap-lined mold. Roll in parsley or sprinkle parsley on top. Refrigerate. **Yield:** 12-14 servings (about 4 cups).

Tomato Cheese Pinwheels

These cheesy pinwheels are our favorite. No matter how many we bake, there are never any left over. The light cheddar tang complements the tomato flavor beautifully. They look complicated but are easy to prepare.

—Maggie Gassett
Hillsborough, New Hampshire

Cucumber Canapes

I always get requests for the recipe whenever I serve these delicate finger sandwiches with a creamy herb spread and festive red and green garnishes.

—Nadine Whittaker
South Plymouth, Massachusetts

Orange-Pecan Hot Wings

We like to use oranges and orange juice in lots of different ways. We even have an orange tree in our backyard! These chicken wings are a fun appetizer.

—June Jones
Hudson, Florida

Icy Holiday Punch

It's easy and convenient to prepare the base of this slushy punch ahead. Its rosy color makes it so pretty for Christmas. I've also made it with apricot gelatin for a bridal shower. This fun beverage makes any occasion a bit more special.

—Margaret Matson
Metamora, Illinois

Orange-Pecan Hot Wings

- 3 pounds whole chicken wings*
- 3 eggs
- 1 can (6 ounces) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup butter, melted

RED HOT SAUCE:

- 2 cups ketchup
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 to 3 tablespoons hot pepper sauce

Cut chicken wings into three pieces; discard wing tips. In a bowl, whisk eggs, orange juice concentrate and water. In another bowl or a resealable plastic bag, combine flour and pecans.

Dip wings in egg mixture, then roll or toss in flour mixture. Pour butter into a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Arrange wings in a single layer in pan. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine sauce ingredients. Spoon half over the wings; turn. Top with remaining sauce. Bake 30 minutes longer or until meat juices run clear. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

***Editor's Note:** 3 pounds of uncooked chicken wing sections can be substituted for the whole chicken wings. Omit the first step of the directions.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Icy Holiday Punch

- 1 package (6 ounces) cherry gelatin
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 can (46 ounces) pineapple juice
- 6 cups cold water
- 2 liters ginger ale, chilled

In a 4-qt. freezer-proof container, dissolve gelatin and sugar in boiling water. Stir in pineapple juice and cold water. Cover and freeze overnight. Remove from the freezer 2 hours before serving. Place in a punch bowl; stir in ginger ale just before serving. **Yield:** 32-36 servings (5-3/4 quarts).

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Tomato Cheese Pinwheels

- 4 to 4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 1-1/4 teaspoons salt
- 3/4 cup warm tomato juice (120° to 130°)
- 1/2 cup warm water (120° to 130°)
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 egg
- 2 cups (8 ounces) finely shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced chives

In a mixing bowl, combine 1 cup flour, sugar, yeast and salt. Add tomato juice, water and butter; beat for 2 minutes on medium speed. Add egg and enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Place in a greased bowl; turn once to grease top. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until doubled.

Punch dough down. Divide in half; roll each half into a 15-in. x 12-in. rectangle approximately 1/8 in. thick. Cut into 3-in. squares. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Make 1-in. slits in each corner of each square.

Combine cheese and chives; place 1 heaping teaspoon in the center of each square. Bring every other corner up to center, overlapping slightly to form a pinwheel; press firmly. Bake at 400° for 8-10 minutes. Remove to a wire rack to cool. **Yield:** 40 appetizers.

Cucumber Canapes

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 tablespoon grated onion
- 1 tablespoon minced chives
- 1/2 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1/8 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/8 teaspoon *each* dried oregano, thyme, basil, parsley flakes and dill weed
- 1 loaf (1 pound) white *or* rye bread
- 2 medium cucumbers, scored and thinly sliced

Diced pimientos and additional dill weed

In a blender or food processor, combine the mayonnaise, cream cheese, onion, chives, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, garlic and seasonings. Cover and process until blended. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours.

Using a 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter, cut out circles from bread slices. Spread mayonnaise mixture over bread; top with cucumber slices. Garnish with pimientos and dill. **Yield:** 2 dozen.

Cherry Punch

Back in 1952, a co-worker gave me the recipe for this versatile, rosy punch. It's not too sweet, so it really refreshes. My family and friends have sipped it at countless gatherings over the years. —Davlyn Jones
San Jose, California

Mozzarella Puffs

These savory, cheesy pizza-like biscuits go over great at my house. Since they're so quick to make, I can easily whip up a batch anytime.
—Joan Mousley Dziuba
Waupaca, Wisconsin

Ground Beef Snack Quiches

A hearty appetizer like these meaty mini quiches is a perfect way to start the meal. They taste super made with ground beef, but I sometimes substitute bacon, ham, ground pork or sausage.
—Stacey Atkinson
Rugby, North Dakota

Appetizer Meatballs

These are a favorite at parties and gatherings. The recipe is easy...and the meatballs can be made well ahead of time and frozen until needed.
—Nathalie Guest
Caledon, Ontario

Top to bottom: Apple Streusel Muffi
Aunt Betty's Blueberry Muffins a
Lemon Raspberry Jumbo Muffi

Ground Beef Snack Quiches

- 1/4 pound ground beef
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup biscuit/baking mix
- 1/4 cup cornmeal
- 1/4 cup cold butter
- 2 to 3 tablespoons boiling water
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup half-and-half cream
- 1 tablespoon chopped green onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped sweet red pepper
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup finely shredded cheddar cheese

In a saucepan over medium heat, cook beef, garlic powder and pepper until meat is no longer pink; drain and set aside. In a bowl, combine the biscuit mix and cornmeal; cut in butter. Add enough water to form a soft dough. Press onto the bottom and up the sides of greased miniature muffin cups. Place teaspoonfuls of beef mixture into each shell.

In a bowl, combine the egg, cream, onion, red pepper, salt and cayenne; pour over beef mixture. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 375° for 20 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. **Yield:** 1-1/2 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Appetizer Meatballs

- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon ketchup
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 2 pounds lean ground beef

SAUCE:

- 1 bottle (14 ounces) hot or regular ketchup
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 jar (12 ounces) apple jelly
- 1 jar (12 ounces) currant jelly

In a bowl, combine the first 11 ingredients; add beef and mix well. Shape into 1-in. balls. Place on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Bake at 350° for 10-15 minutes or until meat is no longer pink. Remove the meatballs and rack; drain.

Combine ketchup and cornstarch in roasting pan. Stir in jellies; add the meatballs. Cover and bake for 30 minutes. **Yield:** about 8 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cherry Punch

- 1 can (6 ounces) frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed
- 1 can (6 ounces) frozen limeade concentrate, thawed
- 1 can (20 ounces) pineapple chunks, undrained
- 2 cups water
- 2 liters cherry soda, chilled
- 2 liters ginger ale, chilled
- Lemon and lime slices, optional

In a blender, combine lemonade and limeade concentrates and pineapple; cover and blend until smooth. Pour into a gallon-size container; stir in water. Store in the refrigerator.

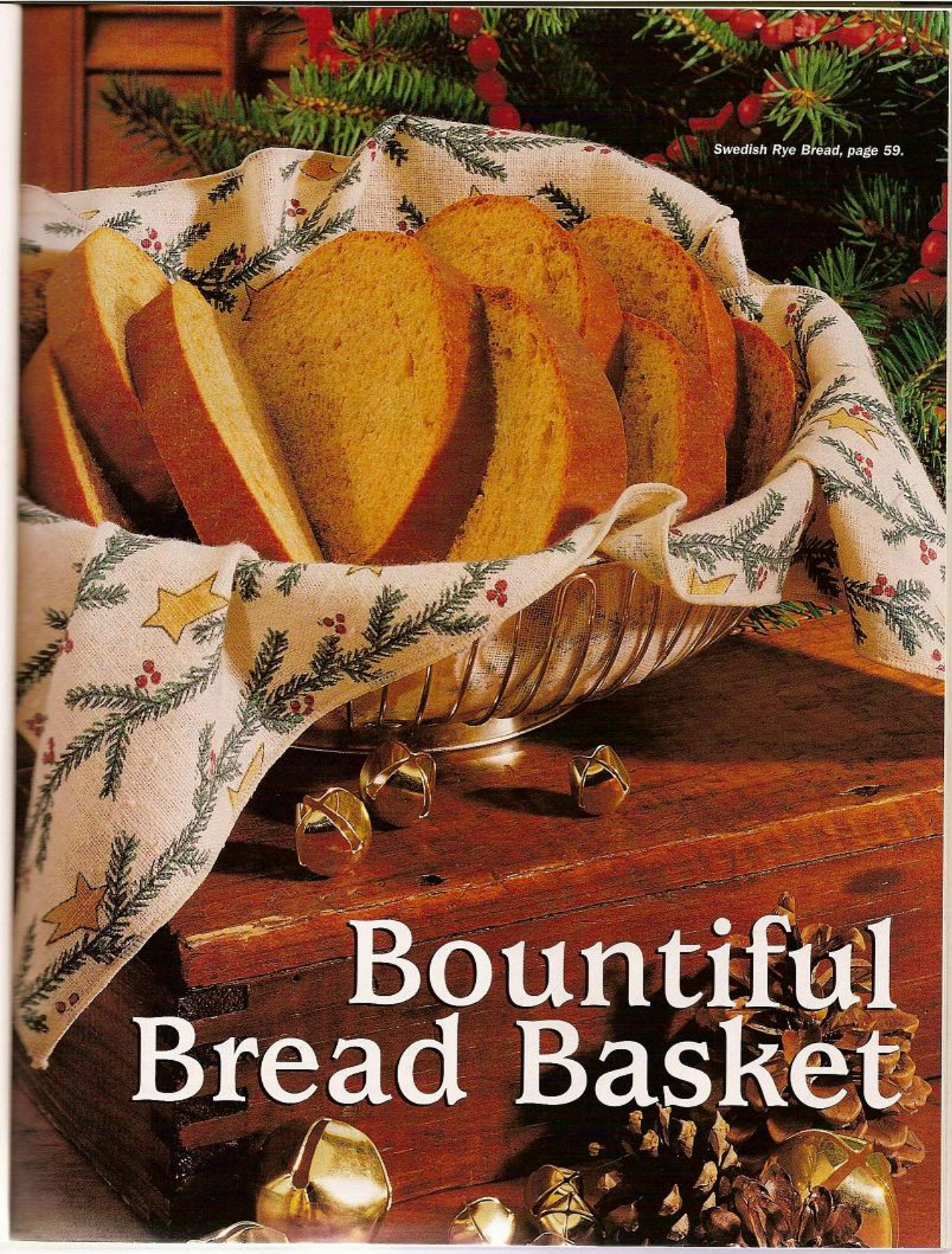
To serve, pour the mixture into a punch bowl; add cherry soda and ginger ale. Garnish with lemon and lime slices if desired. **Yield:** about 6 quarts.

Mozzarella Puffs

- 1 tube (7-1/2 ounces) refrigerated buttermilk biscuits
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 block (2 to 3 ounces) mozzarella cheese
- 2 tablespoons pizza sauce

Make an indentation in the center of each biscuit; sprinkle with oregano. Cut the mozzarella into 10 cubes, 3/4 in. each; place a cube in the center of each biscuit. Pinch dough tightly around cheese to seal.

Place seam side down on an ungreased baking sheet. Spread pizza sauce over tops. Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. **Yield:** 10 servings.


Swedish Rye Bread, page 59.
Bountiful
Bread Basket

Lemon Raspberry Jumbo Muffins

(Pictured at left)

These are my favorite muffins because they can be made with blueberries instead of raspberries with the same delicious results. —Carol Thoreson, Rockford, Illinois

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar
3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
1 cup half-and-half cream
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon lemon extract
1 cup fresh *or* frozen unsweetened raspberries

In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, combine the eggs, cream, oil and extract. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in raspberries.

Fill greased jumbo muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake at 400° for 22-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. Serve warm. **Yield:** 8 jumbo muffins.

Editor's Note: If using frozen raspberries, do not thaw before adding to the batter. Sixteen regular-size muffin cups may be used; bake for 18-20 minutes.

Aunt Betty's Blueberry Muffins

(Pictured at left)

My Aunt Betty bakes many items each Christmas, but I look forward to these mouth-watering muffins the most. —Sheila Raleigh, Kechi, Kansas

1/2 cup old-fashioned oats
1/2 cup orange juice
1 egg
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup sugar
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/4 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1 cup fresh *or* frozen blueberries*
TOPPING:
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a large bowl, combine oats and orange juice; let stand for 5 minutes. Beat in the egg, oil and sugar until blended. Combine the flour, baking powder, salt and baking soda; stir into oat mixture just until moistened. Fold in blueberries.

Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full. Combine topping ingredients; sprinkle over batter. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. **Yield:** about 1 dozen.

***Editor's Note:** If using frozen blueberries, do not thaw before adding to the batter.

Apple Streusel Muffins

(Pictured at left)

Pieces of tender apples appear in every bite of these pretty muffins. —Michele Olsen, Wessington Springs, South Dakota

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar
3 teaspoons baking powder
1-1/4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
1/4 cup butter, melted
1-1/2 cups chopped peeled tart apples
TOPPING:
1/4 cup sugar
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons cold butter

In a large bowl, combine dry ingredients. In another bowl, beat the eggs, sour cream and butter. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in apples. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full.

For topping, combine sugar, flour and cinnamon. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle a rounded teaspoonful over each muffin. Bake at 400° for 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. Serve warm. **Yield:** 16 muffins.

Farmer's Strata

(Pictured above)

For an inexpensive and easy-to-prepare dish, try this hearty casserole. You can assemble it ahead and bake it just before folks arrive for your holiday brunch. It includes tasty basic ingredients like bacon, cheese and potatoes. *—Pat Kuether, Westminster, Colorado*

- **1 pound sliced bacon, diced**
- **2 cups chopped fully cooked ham**
- **1 small onion, chopped**
- **10 slices bread, cubed**
- **1 cup cubed cooked potatoes**
- **3 cups (12 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- **8 eggs**
- **3 cups milk**
- **1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**
- **1 teaspoon ground mustard**
- **Pinch salt and pepper**

In a skillet, cook bacon until crisp; add ham and onion. Cook and stir until onion is tender; drain.

In a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish, layer half the bread cubes, potatoes and cheese. Top with all of the bacon mixture. Repeat layers of bread, potatoes and cheese.

In a bowl, beat the eggs; add milk, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, salt and pepper. Pour over all. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Remove from refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 65-70 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Rhubarb Coffee Cake

(Pictured below)

My daughter gave me the recipe for this moist coffee cake. It mixes up quickly and is ideal for a weekend breakfast. *—Page Alexander, Baldwin City, Kansas*

- **1/2 cup butter, softened**
- **1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **3/4 cup whole wheat flour**
- **1 teaspoon baking powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1 cup buttermilk**
- **2 cups diced fresh *or* frozen rhubarb***

TOPPING:

- **1/4 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- **1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugars. Add egg and vanilla; beat until fluffy. Combine flours, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon; add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk, mixing well after each addition. Stir in rhubarb. Pour into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish.

Combine the topping ingredients; sprinkle evenly over batter. Bake at 350° for 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve warm or at room temperature. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

***Editor's Note:** If using frozen rhubarb, measure rhubarb while still frozen, then thaw completely. Drain in colander, but do not press liquid out.

Almond Croissants

These tender croissants are a little lighter than others I've tried. A close friend of mine serves these every Christmas and Easter. *—Patricia Glass*
East Wenatchee, Washington

- **1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- **1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- **4 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup cold butter**
- **3/4 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- **3 egg yolks**

FILLING:

- **1/2 cup almond paste**
- **1 egg white**
- **1/4 cup confectioners' sugar**

EGG WASH:

- **1 egg white**
- **1 tablespoon water**
- **1/4 cup sliced almonds**

In a bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt. Cut in butter until crumbly. Add milk and egg yolks to yeast mixture; mix well. Stir into flour mixture; mix well. Do not knead. Cover and refrigerate overnight. In a mixing bowl, beat filling ingredients until smooth.

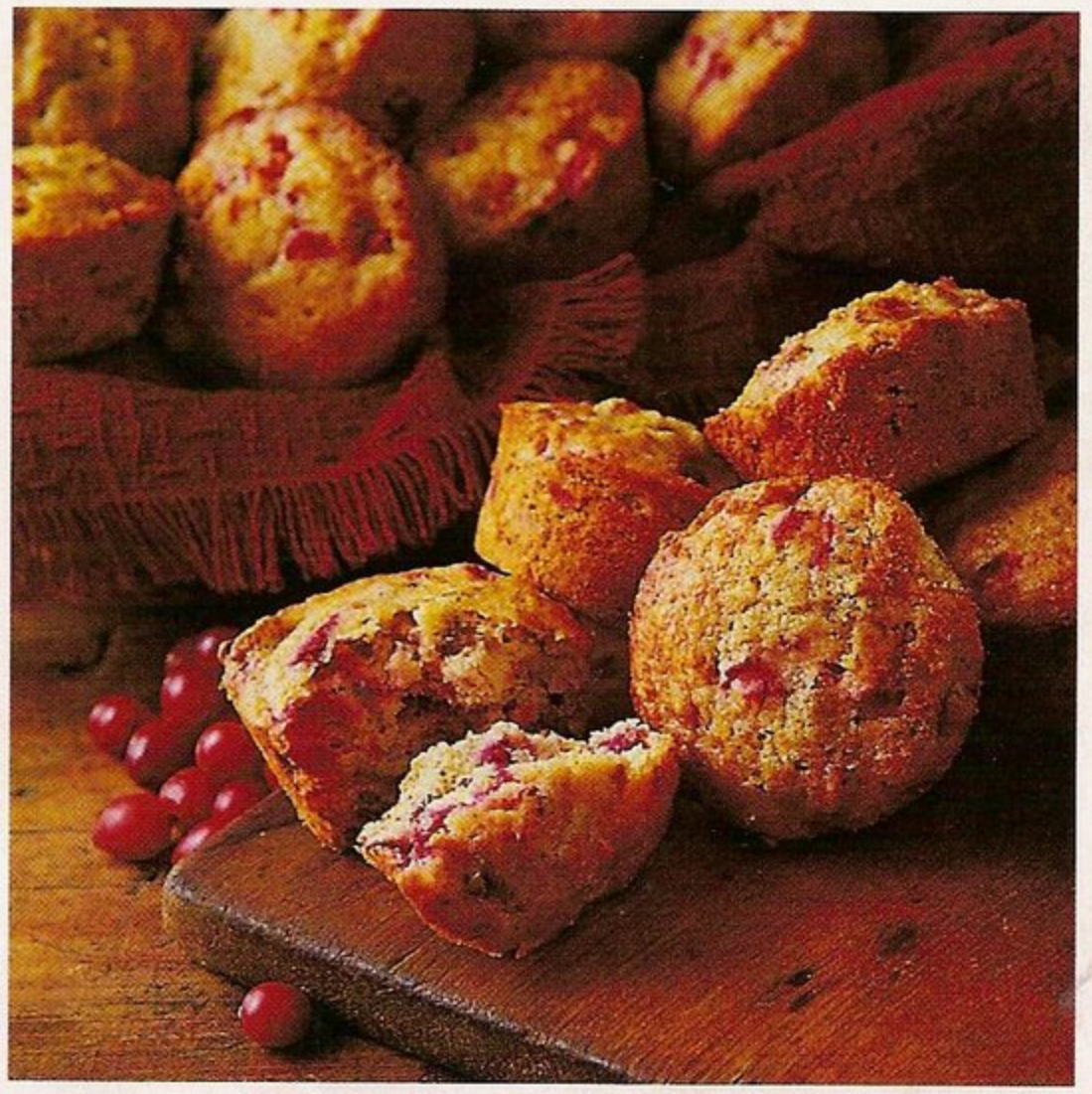
Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface; divide in half. Roll each into a 12-in. circle; cut into eight wedges. Spread filling over wedges. Roll up from wide end and place with pointed end down 3 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Curve ends to form a crescent shape.

Cover and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour (dough will not double). Beat egg white and water; brush over croissants. Sprinkle with almonds. Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** 16 rolls.

Brunch Time-Savers

Speed up breakfast or brunch preparations without getting up at the crack of dawn by gathering recipe ingredients together the night before.

For instance, combine biscuit or muffin ingredients (keeping dry ingredients separate from moist ingredients), and grease muffin tins so they're ready to go. Or chop vegetables and shred cheeses for omelets or scrambles; combine the egg mixture and refrigerate overnight.



Cranberry Muffins

(Pictured above)

This recipe is one of my most favorite ways to use cranberries. I've often given these fresh-baked muffins as a gift to friends, and they're always well received.
—Ronni Dufour, Lebanon, Connecticut

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **2 teaspoons grated orange peel**
- **1/2 cup shortening**
- **3/4 cup orange juice**
- **2 eggs, beaten**
- **1 tablespoon vanilla extract**
- **1-1/2 cups coarsely chopped cranberries**
- **1-1/2 cups chopped pecans**

In a large bowl, combine the first nine ingredients. Cut in shortening until crumbly. Stir in orange juice, eggs and vanilla just until moistened. Fold in cranberries and pecans.

Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake at 375° for 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes before removing to wire rack. **Yield:** 1-1/2 dozen.

Left to right: Cranberry Cinnamon Christmas Tree Rolls and Lemon Candy Canes

Cranberry Cinnamon Christmas Tree Rolls

(Pictured at left)

These festive rolls are sure to spark lively conversations at your holiday brunch. Colorful cranberries make an appetizing addition to ordinary cinnamon rolls.

—Margery Richmond, Lacombe, Alberta

1 tablespoon active dry yeast
1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
3-3/4 to 4-1/4 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

2 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries
1/2 cup water
1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar, *divided*
1 cup chopped pecans
1/3 cup butter, softened
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
1/4 cup butter, melted

TOPPING:

1/4 cup corn syrup
3/4 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon milk
Cranberries and red and green candied cherries, halved

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. In a small saucepan, heat sour cream and butter to 110°-115°. Add the sour cream mixture, sugar, salt, eggs and 1-1/2 cups flour to yeast mixture. Beat on medium speed for 2 minutes. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1-1/2 hours.

Meanwhile, in a saucepan, bring cranberries and water to a boil. Cover and boil gently for 5 minutes. Stir in 1/2 cup brown sugar. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes or until thickened, stirring occasionally. Cool. Combine the pecans, softened butter, cinnamon and remaining brown sugar; set aside.

Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide in half. Roll each into a 14-in. x 12-in. rectangle. Brush each with 1 tablespoon melted butter. Spread half of the filling to within 1/2 in. of edges. Sprinkle with half of the pecan mixture. Roll up, jelly-roll style, starting with a long side; pinch seam to seal. Brush with remaining melted butter.

To form a tree from each log, cut a 2-in. piece from one end for a tree trunk; set aside. Then cut each log into 15 slices. Cover two baking sheets with foil and grease well. Center one slice near the top of each prepared baking sheet. Arrange slice with sides touching in four more rows, adding one slice for each row, forming a tree. Center the reserved slice lengthwise below the tree for trunk. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 45 minutes.

Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until golden. In a saucepan, heat corn syrup over low heat. Transfer foil with trees onto wire racks; brush with corn syrup. Cool for 20 minutes.

Combine confectioners' sugar and milk. Fill a small pastry or plastic bag; cut a small hole in corner of bag. Pipe on trees for garlands. Garnish with cranberries and candied cherries. **Yield:** 2 trees (16 rolls each).

Lemon Candy Canes

(Pictured at left)

We enjoy looking at these cute candy cane rolls as much as we love eating them! For even more festive fun, I sometimes decorate them with sliced candied cherries.

—Marie Frangpane, Eugene, Oregon

1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
1/3 cup sour cream
1 egg
3 tablespoons butter, softened
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2-3/4 to 3 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts *or* pecans
1/3 cup sugar
3 tablespoons butter, melted
1 tablespoon grated lemon peel

LEMON ICING:

1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 tablespoon water
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add the sour cream, egg, butter, sugar, salt and 1-1/4 cups flour. Beat un-

Lemon Candy Canes continued on page 14 ➲

Cheddar Potato Strips

(Pictured above)

This easy dish wins compliments every time I serve it to family and guests. Fresh parsley adds flavor and looks nice sprinkled over the melted cheddar cheese.
—Lucinda Walker, Somerset, Pennsylvania

3 large potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch strips
1/2 cup milk
1 tablespoon butter
Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley

In a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish, arrange potatoes in a single layer. Pour milk over potatoes. Dot with butter; sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Cover and bake at 425° for 30 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Sprinkle with cheese and parsley. Bake, uncovered, 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Gingered Lime Carrots

(Pictured at right)

The produce manager at my grocery store suggested this memorable mixture of lightly sweet carrots, zippy ginger and tart lime. It's easy to fall in love with this recipe!
—Dorothy Swanson, St. Louis, Missouri

1 pound carrots, cut into 1/2-inch slices
1 tablespoon water
1 tablespoon lime juice
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon honey
1 teaspoon grated lime peel
1 teaspoon grated fresh gingerroot
Lime slices

In a 1-1/2-qt. microwave-safe bowl, combine carrots and water. Cover and cook on high for 7-8 minutes or until crisp-tender, stirring once. Let stand for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine lime juice, butter, honey, peel and ginger. Cover and microwave on high for 1 minute. Drain carrots; stir in the lime mixture. Cover and cook on high for 1 minute. Garnish with lime. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in an 850-watt microwave.

Orange Rice Medley

(Pictured above right)

My family especially enjoys this lovely, slightly sweet side dish. It looks so pretty with the chopped green and red peppers and orange slices tucked in with the rice. *—Zita Wilensky, North Miami, Florida*

1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped green pepper

1/2 cup chopped sweet red pepper
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 cup uncooked long grain rice
1-1/2 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup orange juice
1/4 teaspoon salt
Dash pepper
1 can (11 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained and coarsely chopped

In a saucepan over medium heat, saute onion and peppers in oil until tender. Add rice; stir until lightly browned. Add broth, orange juice, salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Stir in the oranges. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Veggie Refresher

Limp vegetables like carrots and potatoes can regain their crisp texture if soaked in ice water for at least 1 hour. You can also keep blanched vegetables bright and crisp by draining the hot water, immediately placing the vegetables in ice water until cool and then draining.

Cranberry Apple Relish

(Pictured below)

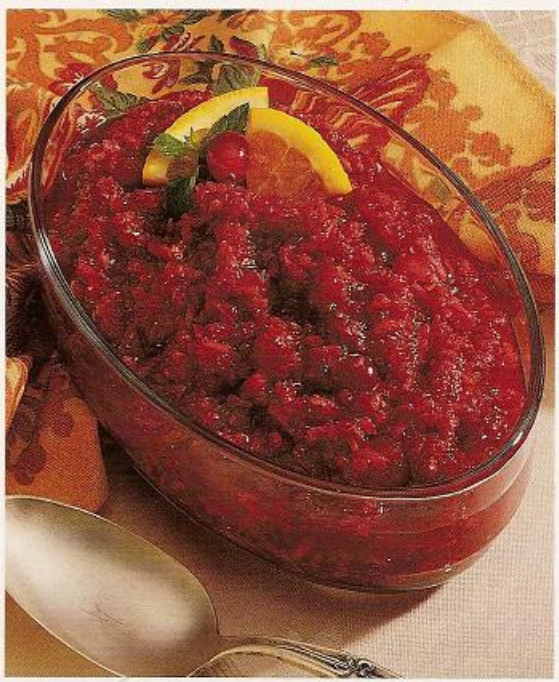
I first made this relish when I was just 14. My mother wasn't able to prepare Thanksgiving dinner that year, so I was the cook for our family of 12! We all liked this dish so much that it became our family's traditional cranberry relish. —*Bonnie Lee Morris*
Chase, British Columbia

1 navel orange
4 cups fresh *or* frozen cranberries
4 large red apples, peeled and grated
2 cups sugar

Finely grate outer orange peel and set aside. Peel off and discard white membrane. Slice the orange into eight pieces. Place a fourth of cranberries and orange slices in a food processor or blender; process until evenly chopped.

Transfer to a large bowl; repeat until all cranberries and orange slices have been chopped. Stir in the apples, sugar and reserved peel. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. **Yield:** 6 cups.

Editor's Note: Relish will keep in an airtight container for 1 week in the refrigerator, or freeze in serving-size portions.



Top to bottom: Holiday Sour Cream Rings, Cranberry Orange Loaf (page 58) and Swiss Butterhorns.

Holiday Sour Cream Rings

(Pictured at left)

These delicious sour cream rings have become part of our traditional Christmas breakfast. But my family and friends love the sweet flavor so much, I find myself making them throughout the year as well.

—Lois McAtee, Oceanside, California

- **2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast**
- **1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- **2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- **2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream**
- **2/3 cup sugar**
- **1/3 cup butter, melted**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons salt**
- **1 teaspoon ground mace**
- **1 teaspoon ground cardamom**
- **5-3/4 to 6-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 cup *each* raisins, chopped candied pineapple and chopped candied cherries**
- **1 tablespoon brandy *or* orange juice**
- **1-1/3 cups confectioners' sugar**
- **4 to 6 teaspoons orange juice**
- **Whole candied cherries**

In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add eggs, sour cream, sugar, butter, salt, mace, cardamom and 3 cups flour; beat until smooth. Add enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Meanwhile, combine raisins, pineapple, cherries and brandy or orange juice; mix well and set aside. Punch dough down. Pat into a 16-in. x 12-in. rectangle. Sprinkle with fruit. Fold over and knead lightly to distribute fruit. Divide dough into sixths. Roll each portion into a 16-in. rope. Place two ropes on a greased baking sheet. Intertwine them seven to eight times, joining ends to form a ring. Repeat with remaining dough.

Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 45 minutes. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until golden. Cool 15 minutes. Combine confectioners' sugar and orange juice; spread over rings. Decorate with candied cherries. **Yield:** 3 loaves.

Swiss Butterhorns

(Pictured at left)

My husband and I like to entertain at breakfast, and we're always looking for new recipes. So I was thrilled when my daughter shared this butterhorn recipe with me. They're so rich, light and easy to make.

—Cheryl Paulsen, Granville, Iowa

DOUGH:

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 cup cold margarine**
- **1/3 cup cold butter**
- **1 egg yolk, lightly beaten**
- **3/4 cup sour cream**

FILLING:

- **1/2 cup chopped pecans**
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**

GLAZE (optional):

- **1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- **2 tablespoons milk**
- **1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**

In a large bowl, combine flour and salt. Cut in margarine and butter until crumbly. Stir in egg yolk and sour cream; shape into a ball. Chill several hours or overnight. Divide dough into thirds.

On a well-floured surface, roll each portion into a 12-in. circle. Combine filling ingredients. Sprinkle a third of the filling over each circle. Cut each circle into 12 wedges. Roll each wedge, starting at the wide end. Place on greased baking sheets with points down. Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes or until lightly browned. Combine all glaze ingredients and spread on warm rolls if desired. **Yield:** 3 dozen.

Shaping Butterhorns

Roll a portion of the dough into a 12-in. circle. Cut into wedges, sprinkle with filling if desired and roll up, beginning at the wide end. Repeat with remaining dough.

Cranberry Orange Loaf

(Pictured on page 56)

I'm a true morning person who loves entertaining at breakfast. It's so much fun to get up early, set a pretty table and share a delicious breakfast with friends.

—Peggy Frazier, Indianapolis, Indiana

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **1 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1 egg**
- **1/2 cup orange juice**
- **Grated peel of 1 orange**
- **2 tablespoons butter, melted**
- **2 tablespoons hot water**
- **1 cup fresh *or* frozen cranberries**
- **1 cup chopped walnuts**

In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In a small bowl, beat the egg; add the orange juice, peel, butter and water. Stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in the cranberries and nuts. Spoon into a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan or two 5-in. x 2-1/2-in. x 2-in. mini-loaf pans.

Bake at 325° for 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack. **Yield:** 1 loaf or 2 mini loaves.

Pumpkin Bread

A friend of mine graciously shared her "secret recipe" for this bread with me. It's become such a family favorite that I'm not allowed to enter my family's get-togethers without this bread in hand!

—Shirley Sober, Granada Hills, California

- **1 cup butter, softened**
- **3 cups sugar**
- **3 eggs**
- **3 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 tablespoon baking powder**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons ground cloves**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons ground nutmeg**
- **1 can (16 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin**

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs; mix well. Combine dry ingredients; stir into creamed mixture just until moistened. Stir in pumpkin. Pour into two greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Potato Pan Rolls

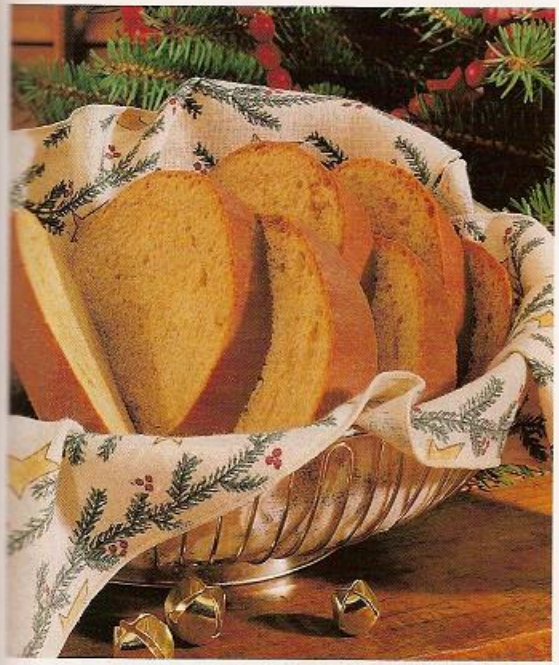
(Pictured at left)

My family loves these rolls, which is why they're requested often. They don't take long to make because quick-rise yeast is used.

—Connie Storckman, Evanston, Wyoming

- **4-1/2 to 5 cups all-purpose flour**
- **3 tablespoons sugar**
- **2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) quick-rise yeast**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons salt**
- **1-1/4 cups water**
- **3 tablespoons butter**
- **1/2 cup mashed potatoes (prepared without milk *or* butter)**
- **Additional all-purpose flour**

In a mixing bowl, combine 2 cups flour, sugar, yeast and salt. In a saucepan, heat water and butter to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat until smooth. Stir in mashed potatoes and enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes.



Divide into 16 pieces. Shape each into a ball. Place in two greased 8-in. or 9-in. round baking pans. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes. Sprinkle with additional flour. Bake at 400° for 18-22 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** 16 rolls.

Swedish Rye Bread

(Pictured above and on page 45)

This recipe came from my mother, and it's long been a family favorite. You can make a meal of it with soup and a salad. —*Mary Ann Ross, Crown Point, Indiana*

1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
1-3/4 cups warm water (110° to 115°), *divided*
1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup molasses
2 tablespoons shortening
2 teaspoons salt
2-1/2 cups rye flour
3-3/4 to 4-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons butter, melted

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/4 cup water. Add sugar, molasses, shortening, salt and remaining water; stir well. Add rye flour; beat until smooth. Add enough all-purpose flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1-1/2 hours.

Punch dough down. Shape into four round loaves. Place on greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 45-60 minutes. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Brush with butter. **Yield:** 4 loaves.

Cinnamon Raisin Bread

Slices of warm cinnamon bread and a cup of hot tea work wonders for holiday visitors to our home. My mother received this recipe from a friend in West Virginia. —*Joan Ort, Milford, New Jersey*

2 packages (1/4 ounce *each*) active dry yeast
2 cups warm water (110° to 115°)
1 cup sugar, *divided*
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 tablespoon salt
2 eggs
6 to 6-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup raisins
Additional vegetable oil
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add 1/2 cup sugar, oil, salt, eggs and 4 cups flour. Beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes.

Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down.

Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide in half. Knead 1/2 cup raisins into each portion; roll into a 15-in. x 9-in. rectangle. Brush with additional oil.

Combine cinnamon and remaining sugar; sprinkle to within 1/2 in. of edges. Tightly roll up, jelly-roll style, starting with a short side; pinch seam to seal.

Place, seam side down, in two greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pans. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes. Brush with oil. Bake at 375° for 45-50 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Cheesy Round Bread

This bread, which looks similar to focaccia, has a light olive and garlic flavor. We enjoy generous slices with soup. —Ruthe Krohne, Fort Wayne, Indiana

- **1 package (16 ounces) hot roll mix**
- **3/4 cup warm water (120° to 130°)**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tablespoon butter, softened**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons garlic salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried oregano**
- **1/2 teaspoon paprika**
- **3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese**
- **1/2 cup chopped ripe olives, well drained**
- **1 egg white, beaten**

In a mixing bowl, combine contents of roll mix and yeast packet. Add warm water; mix well. Add the egg, butter and seasonings. Turn onto a floured surface. Knead in cheese and olives. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Punch dough down. Press into a 12-in. pizza pan. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes. With a sharp knife, make three or four slashes across top of loaf. Brush with egg white. Bake at 325° for 40-45 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

Garlic Potato Biscuits

We grow our own potatoes and garlic, so these delectable biscuits are on our table often. I make biscuits a lot because they're quicker and easier than rolls. —Diane Hixon, Niceville, Florida

- **1/2 pound diced peeled potatoes (about 1 large)**
- **3 to 4 garlic cloves, peeled**
- **1/3 cup butter, softened**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1 tablespoon baking powder**
- **1/3 cup milk**

Place potatoes and garlic cloves in a saucepan. Add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer until tender. Drain well.

Mash potatoes and garlic with butter, salt and pepper. In a bowl, combine flour and baking powder; stir in potato mixture until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add milk and stir well.

Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Roll to 1/2-in. thickness; cut with a floured 2-in. biscuit cutter. Place 1 in. apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 450° for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm. **Yield:** 15 biscuits.

Sweet Sesame Bread

Aniseed gives this festive Greek bread its unusual yet pleasing flavor. Everyone in the family runs to the kitchen for a fresh-from-the-oven slice. —Kristi Parker, Merrimack, New Hampshire

- **1 tablespoon active dry yeast**
- **1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- **1/4 cup butter, softened**
- **1/4 cup sugar**
- **3 tablespoons instant nonfat dry milk powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon crushed aniseed**
- **2 eggs**
- **2-1/2 to 3 cups all-purpose flour**

TOPPING:

- **1 egg**
- **1 tablespoon milk**
- **2 tablespoons sesame seeds**
- **2 tablespoons chopped almonds**
- **2 tablespoons sugar**

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add the butter, sugar, milk powder, salt, aniseed, eggs and 2 cups flour. Beat on low speed for 3 minutes. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into thirds.

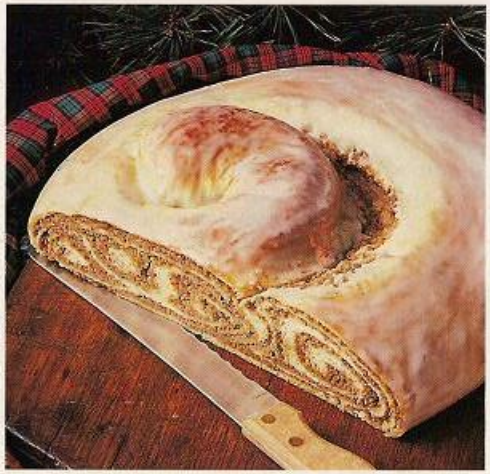
Shape each into a 15-in. rope. Place ropes on a greased baking sheet; braid. Pinch ends to seal and tuck under. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 45 minutes. Beat egg and milk; brush over braid. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, almonds and sugar. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan to a wire rack to cool. Serve warm or at room temperature. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

Cinnamon Swirl Orange Bread

My family waits expectantly for me to bake this beautiful sweet bread every year at this time. The tempting aroma as it's baking fills the kitchen and makes everybody eager for a thick slice of this yummy treat.

—Linda Eager
Harlan, Indiana

Poteca Nut Roll



My mother-in-law brought this recipe from Yugoslavia in the early 1900s. It was a tradition in her family to serve it for holidays and special occasions. Now it's my tradition. Family members often help roll out the dough and add the filling.

—Mrs. Anthony Setta
Saegertown, Pennsylvania

Eggnog Bread

Someone always asks for the recipe when I make this rich bread for the holidays or to give as gifts. It's easy to make and delicious. The bread is a traditional part of the season at my home here in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

—Ruth Bickel
Hickory, North Carolina

Gingerbread Scones

These moist scones have a festive gingerbread flavor. They're a scrumptious treat with tea or coffee and especially nice to serve around Christmastime.

—David Bostedt
Zephyrhills, Florida

Eggnog Bread

- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup eggnog*
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped red and green candied cherries

In a large bowl, combine butter, sugar and eggs; mix well. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt. Stir into butter mixture alternately with eggnog just until moistened. Fold in pecans, raisins and cherries. Spoon into a greased 8-1/2-in. x 4-1/2-in. x 2-1/2-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 70 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. **Yield:** 1 loaf.

***Editor's Note:** This recipe was made with commercially prepared eggnog.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Gingerbread Scones

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup cold butter
- 1/3 cup molasses
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 egg, *separated*

Sugar

In a large bowl, combine flour, brown sugar, baking powder, ginger, baking soda, salt and cinnamon. Cut in butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a small bowl, combine the molasses, milk and egg yolk until smooth; stir into the flour mixture just until moistened.

Turn out onto a floured surface; knead gently 6-8 times. Pat into an 8-in. circle; cut into 12 wedges and place 1 in. apart on a greased baking sheet. Beat egg white until frothy; brush over scones. Sprinkle with sugar. Bake at 400° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm. **Yield:** 1 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Cinnamon Swirl Orange Bread

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
- 1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
- 3/4 cup orange juice
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 tablespoon grated orange peel
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
- 6-1/4 to 6-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 egg, lightly beaten

FILLING:

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 to 3 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons water

GLAZE:

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 4 teaspoons orange juice
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel

Dissolve yeast in water. In a mixing bowl, combine milk, orange juice, sugar, shortening, peel and salt. Add 2 cups flour, yeast mixture and egg; mix well. Add enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, 8-10 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, 1-1/4 hours.

Punch dough down and divide in half. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes. Roll each half into a 15-in. x 7-in. rectangle. For filling, combine sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over each rectangle. Sprinkle each with 1 teaspoon water. Roll up, jelly-roll style, starting with a short end. Seal edges. Place sealed edge down in two greased 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pans. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1 hour. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan and cool on wire racks. Combine glaze ingredients; spread over loaves. **Yield:** 2 loaves.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Poteca Nut Roll

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
- 3/4 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 3 to 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

- 4 cups ground *or* finely chopped walnuts
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract, optional

Milk

- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar, optional

In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in water. Add milk, sugar, shortening, salt, egg and 1-1/2 cups flour; beat until smooth. Add enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover; let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Combine nuts, brown sugar, butter, eggs, vanilla and lemon extract if desired. Add enough milk until mixture is of spreading consistency, about 1/2 cup; set aside.

Punch dough down. Roll into a 30-in. x 20-in. rectangle. Spread filling to within 1 in. of edges. Roll up from one long side; pinch seams and ends to seal. Place on a greased baking sheet; shape into a tight spiral. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 1 hour. Bake at 350° for 35 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack. If desired, brush with a glaze of confectioners' sugar and milk. **Yield:** 1 coffee cake.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Wonderful English Muffins

When I was growing up on a farm, my mom always seemed to be making homemade bread...nothing tasted so good! Now I like to make these simple yet delicious muffins for my own family.

—Linda Rasmussen
Twin Falls, Idaho

Angel Biscuits

I first received a sample of these light and wonderful biscuits, along with the recipe, from an elderly gentleman friend. I now bake them often as a Saturday-morning treat, served with butter and honey. They're perfect with sausage gravy, too!

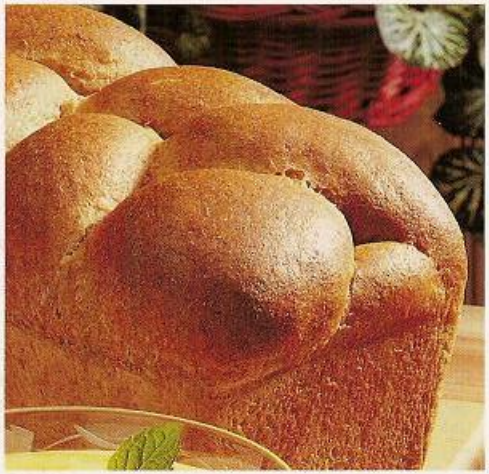
—Faye Hintz
Springfield, Missouri

Pumpkin Cranberry Nut Bread

This bread has a terrific combination of flavors that's perfect for the holidays. I like to make and freeze loaves to share with friends and neighbors.

—Darlene Conger
Greenville, Texas

Whole Wheat Toasting Bread



This recipe for whole wheat bread is one of my absolute favorites. Try it topped with a fruit spread for a fast and flavorful breakfast.

—Evelyn Danby
Sarnia, Ontario

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Orange Biscuits

These biscuits are a special treat with a ham dinner, but they're also delicious just by themselves. They're often requested by my five children and seven grandchildren. I've been enjoying them since the 1940s.

—Winifred Brown
Wilmette, Illinois

Date Pecan Tea Bread

Packed with dates and nuts, this moist, nicely sweet bread is excellent on its own and even better topped with the chunky cream cheese spread. We enjoy it during the holiday season and for after-school and late-night snacks. *—Carole Resnick*
Cleveland, Ohio

Danish Kringle

This traditional yeast bread wonderfully reflects my Scandinavian heritage. Flaky layers of tender dough are flavored with almond paste. The unique sugar cookie crumb coating adds the perfect amount of sweetness.

—Lorna Jacobsen
Arrowwood, Alberta

Soft Italian Bread Twists

Although my heritage is strictly Dutch, my family loves Italian food. These seasoned breadsticks are a great accompaniment to lasagna or pizza.

—Marcia Rand
Adams, Nebraska

Danish Kringle

8 tablespoons butter, softened, *divided*
1-1/2 to 2 cups all-purpose flour, *divided*
1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
2 tablespoons warm water (110° to 115°)
1/4 cup warm half-and-half cream (110° to 115°)
2 tablespoons sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 egg, beaten
1/2 cup almond paste
1 egg white, beaten
1/4 cup sugar cookie crumbs
2 tablespoons sliced almonds

In a mixing bowl, cream 6 tablespoons butter and 2 tablespoons flour. Spread into an 8-in. x 4-in. rectangle on waxed paper. Cover with waxed paper; refrigerate. In a mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add cream, sugar, salt and egg; beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.

Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Do not let rise. Roll into an 8-in. square. Remove top sheet of waxed paper from butter mixture; invert onto center of dough. Peel off waxed paper. Fold plain dough over butter layer. Fold widthwise into thirds. Roll into a 12-in. x 6-in. rectangle. Fold into thirds. Repeat rolling and folding twice. Wrap in waxed paper; refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Roll into a 24-in. x 5-in. rectangle. In a mixing bowl, beat almond paste and remaining butter; until smooth. Spread lengthwise down center of dough. Fold dough over filling to cover; pinch to seal. Place on a greased baking sheet. Shape into a pretzel. Flatten lightly. Cover; let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Brush with egg white. Sprinkle with cookie crumbs and almonds. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until golden. Carefully remove from pan to a wire rack to cool. **Yield:** 16-20 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Soft Italian Bread Twists

1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt, *divided*
1 package (1/4 ounce) quick-rise yeast
2 to 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2/3 cup warm water (120° to 130°)
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
3 tablespoons butter, melted
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon paprika
Italian seasoning *or* grated Parmesan cheese, optional

In a food processor, combine the sugar, 3/4 teaspoon salt, yeast and 2 cups flour. Cover and process for 5-10 seconds. While processing, gradually add warm water and oil in a steady stream. Process for 1 minute or until smooth and elastic. Check dough; add 1 to 2 tablespoons of water or flour if needed.

Turn onto a floured surface. Roll into a 15-in. x 12-in. rectangle. Cut into 12 strips. Fold each strip in half lengthwise; twist each strip several times. Pinch ends to seal. Place 2 in. apart on a greased baking sheet. In a bowl, combine butter, garlic powder, paprika and remaining salt. Brush some over dough. Sprinkle with Italian seasoning or Parmesan cheese if desired. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 25 minutes.

Bake at 425° for 6-8 minutes or until golden brown. Brush with remaining butter mixture. **Yield:** 1 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Orange Biscuits

1/2 cup orange juice
3/4 cup sugar, *divided*
1/4 cup butter
2 teaspoons grated orange peel
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup shortening
3/4 cup milk
Melted butter
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a saucepan, combine orange juice, 1/2 cup sugar, butter and orange peel. Cook and stir over medium heat for 2 minutes. Divide among 12 muffin cups; set aside.

In a large bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. With a fork, stir in milk until mixture forms a ball.

On a lightly floured surface, knead the dough for 1 minute. Roll into a 9-in. square, about 1/2 in. thick. Brush with melted butter. Combine the cinnamon and remaining sugar; sprinkle over butter. Roll up. Cut into 12 slices, about 3/4 in. thick. Place slices, cut side down, over orange mixture in muffin cups. Bake at 450° for 12-16 minutes. Cool for 2-3 minutes; remove from pan. **Yield:** 1 dozen.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Date Pecan Tea Bread

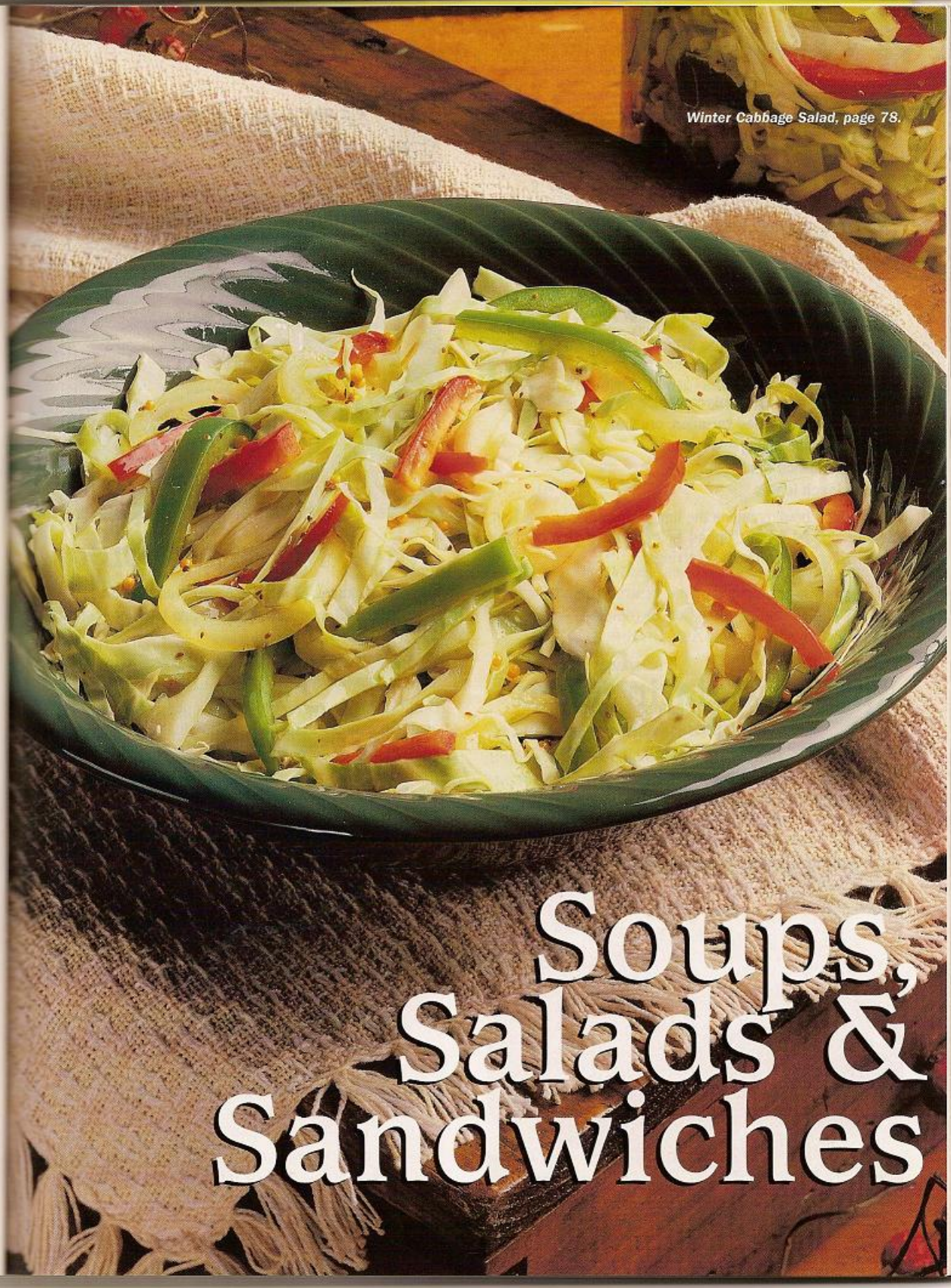
2-1/2 cups chopped dates
1-1/2 cups boiling water
1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon *each* ground cloves, cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg
2 tablespoons butter, softened
1-1/4 cups sugar
1 egg
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1-1/2 cups coarsely chopped pecans
SPREAD:
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
2 tablespoons chopped dates
2 tablespoons coarsely chopped pecans
1 tablespoon milk

Place dates in a bowl. Combine boiling water and baking soda; pour over dates. Combine flour, cloves, cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg in another bowl; set aside. In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg and vanilla. Add dry ingredients alternately with date mixture. Stir in pecans.

Pour into a greased and floured 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 65-75 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

In a small bowl, combine spread ingredients. Chill for 1 hour. Serve with the bread. **Yield:** 1 loaf (1/2 cup spread).

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004



Winter Cabbage Salad, page 78.

Soups, Salads & Sandwiches

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Seafood Salad Sandwiches

I've enjoyed cooking for many years...luckily my husband and two sons were always ready to try new recipes. Now I have three grandsons who love to come and eat at Grandma's house. —Saundra Woods, Woodbury, Tennessee

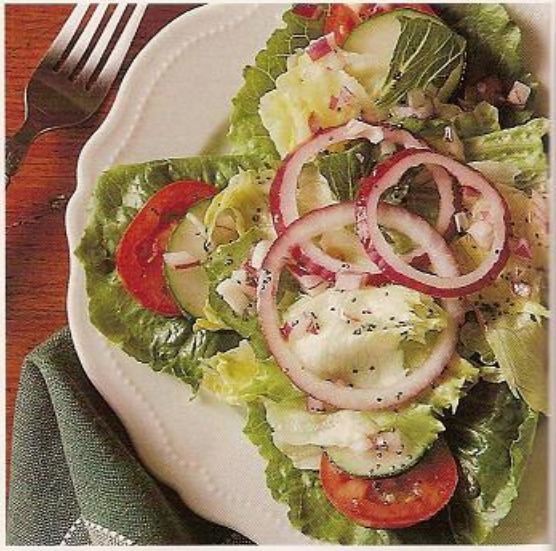
- **8 ounces cooked salad shrimp *or* flaked cooked crab**
- **3/4 cup chopped celery**
- **2/3 cup mayonnaise**
- **1 teaspoon dried minced onion**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon, crushed**
- **1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**
- **4 sandwich buns, split**
- **Fresh spinach leaves**

In a medium bowl, combine the first six ingredients; mix well. Chill for at least 1 hour. Spoon 1/2 cup onto each bun; top with spinach leaves. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Apricot Gelatin Salad

(Pictured below)

A family who usually passes up molded salads will hunt for this fruity version at our covered dish buffet. Not only is it delicious, it adds color to any meal.
—Neva Jane Upp, Hutchinson, Kansas



- **2 cans (16 ounces *each*) apricot halves**
- **Pinch salt**
- **2 packages (3 ounces *each*) orange gelatin**
- **1 can (6 ounces) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed**
- **1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- **1 cup lemon-lime soda**

Drain apricots, reserving 1-1/2 cups juice; set apricots aside. In a small saucepan over medium heat, bring apricot juice and salt to a boil. Remove from the heat; add gelatin and stir until dissolved.

In a blender, process apricots, orange juice concentrate and lemon juice until smooth. Add to gelatin mixture along with soda; mix well.

Pour into a 6-cup mold that has been sprayed with nonstick cooking spray. Chill until firm. **Yield:** 10 servings.

Green Salad with Poppy Seed Dressing

(Pictured above)

Colorful and refreshing, this green salad is a delightful addition to any menu! The dressing's an easy one to make, and it provides a tangy blend of sweet and sour.
—Toni Garman, Spokane, Washington

- 1 head lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
- 1 small cucumber, sliced
- 1/4 medium red onion, sliced

DRESSING:

- 1 cup honey
- 1 cup vinegar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- 2 slices red onion, finely diced

In a large salad bowl, toss together lettuce, cucumber and red onion; set aside. In a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine all dressing ingredients; shake until well blended. Just before serving, pour about 1/2 cup dressing over salad; toss lightly. Cover and refrigerate remaining dressing for up to 1 week. **Yield:** 3 cups dressing.

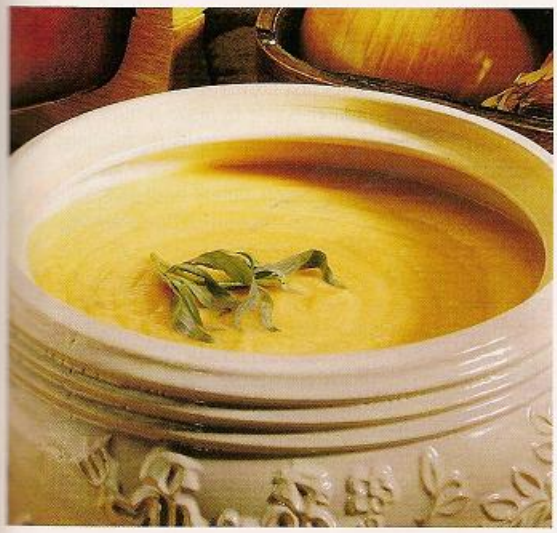
Golden Autumn Soup

(Pictured below)

Here's a great way to use the freshest produce harvested in fall. It's a hot and hearty soup that I like to make for everyday dinners and special-occasion suppers.

—Janet Willick, St. Michael, Alberta

- 5 medium parsnips, peeled and chopped
- 5 medium carrots, sliced
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled and chopped
- 1 medium turnip, peeled and chopped
- 2 celery ribs, sliced
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 cans (14-1/2 ounces *each*) chicken broth
- 2 cups half-and-half cream *or* evaporated fat-free milk
- 1 teaspoon dried tarragon
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper



In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, combine the first eight ingredients; simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Remove bay leaves. Let cool for 20 minutes. Puree in small batches in a blender; return to kettle. Add cream, tarragon and pepper; heat through. **Yield:** 12 servings (3 quarts).

Pork Salad Rolls

Our sons request these sandwiches so much I often prepare extra pork roast with this recipe in mind. They especially like them served on tortillas.

—Katie Koziolek, Hartland, Minnesota

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 cups shredded cooked pork
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced celery
- 1/2 cup halved seedless green grapes
- 6 flour tortillas (6-1/2 inches) *or* rolls

Lettuce leaves, optional

In a medium bowl, combine the mayonnaise, mustard, lemon juice, seasoned salt and pepper. Add pork, celery and grapes; mix well. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Spoon 1/2 cup onto each tortilla; add lettuce if desired. Roll up. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Soup's On

Soups make an elegant first course for a special meal. When selecting a soup for dinner, choose something that complements the flavors of the other dishes. A creamy bisque goes well with grilled meats and sauteed vegetables, but would be too much with a rich entree like stroganoff.

Four-Fruit Compote

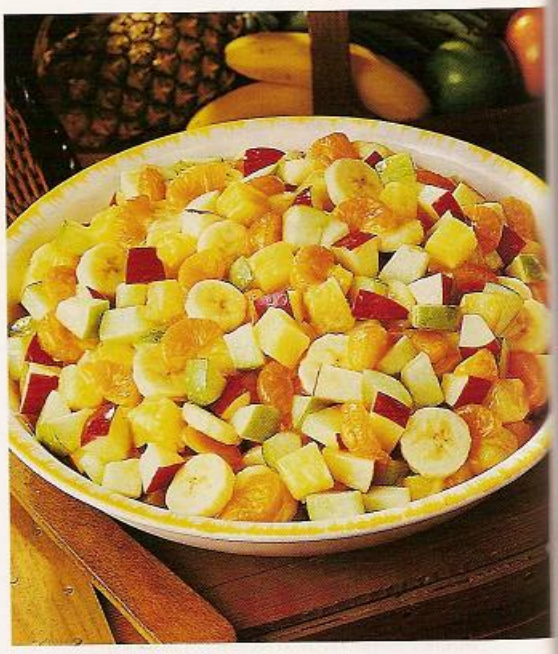
(Pictured at right)

A beautiful side dish, this compote spotlights winter fruit like bananas, apples, oranges and pineapple. Of course, it can be made anytime of year. I'm sure you'll get as many smiles as I do when I bring out this refreshing salad. —*Donna Long, Searcy, Arkansas*

- **1 can (20 ounces) pineapple chunks, undrained**
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- **1/3 cup orange juice**
- **1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- **1 can (11 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained**
- **3 to 4 unpeeled apples, chopped**
- **2 to 3 firm bananas, sliced**

Drain pineapple, reserving 3/4 cup juice. In a saucepan, combine sugar and cornstarch. Add pineapple juice, orange juice and lemon juice. Cook and stir over medium heat for 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly. Remove from the heat; set aside.

In a bowl, combine pineapple chunks, oranges, apples and bananas. Pour warm sauce over the fruit; stir gently to coat. Cover and refrigerate. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.



Matzo Ball Soup

My mother is of Russian descent and would make this for Friday night dinner while I was growing up. It's a very comforting soup that brings back many happy memories. —*Bernice Polak, New Smyrna Beach, Florida*

- **1 broiler-fryer chicken (3-1/2 to 4 pounds), cut up**
- **2 quarts water**
- **6 carrots, cut in half lengthwise, then into 2-inch pieces**
- **1 large onion, peeled**
- **2 celery ribs, cut in half**
- **2 sprigs fresh dill (3 inches)**
- **1 can (49 ounces) chicken broth**
- **2 teaspoons salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 cups cooked noodles**

MATZO BALLS:

- **2 eggs**
- **1 cup matzo meal**
- **2 tablespoons shortening**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- **2 teaspoons salt**

Dash pepper

- **1/2 to 1 cup cold water**

Place chicken and water in an 8-qt. soup kettle. Cover and bring to a boil; skim fat. Add carrots, onion and celery. Fold dill in half and wrap many times with kitchen string; add to soup. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover but keep lid ajar and simmer for 2-1/2 hours.

Meanwhile, combine first six matzo ball ingredients in a medium bowl. Add enough water to make a thick pancake-like batter. Refrigerate for 2 hours (mixture thickens as it stands).

Remove and discard onion, celery and dill from broth. Remove chicken and allow to cool; debone and cut into chunks. Skim fat from broth. Return chicken to kettle. Add canned broth, salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer.

To complete matzo balls, bring 4 qts. water to a boil in a 5-qt. Dutch oven. With very wet hands, form heaping teaspoonfuls of batter into balls. If mixture is too thin, stir in 1-2 tablespoons of matzo meal. Drop balls into boiling water. (They will sink when dropped but will rise in a few minutes.) Cook for 10 minutes. Remove with slotted spoon and add to simmering soup. Add noodles; heat through. **Yield:** 18 servings (4-1/2 quarts).

Lime Gelatin Salad

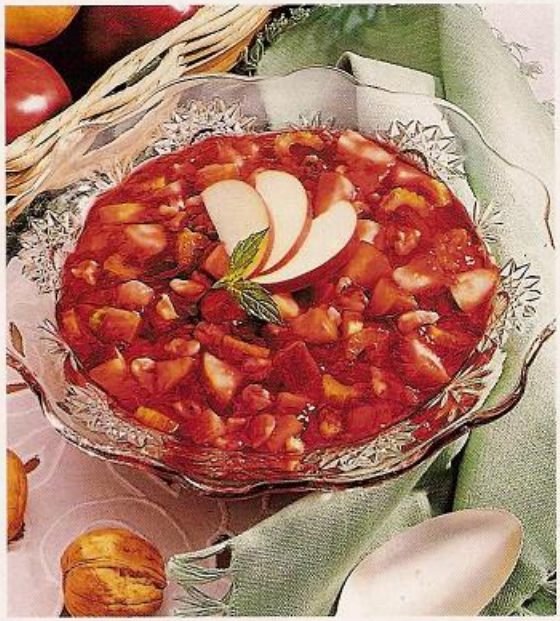
(Pictured below)

I've made this refreshing recipe hundreds of times! It can be a salad or dessert. When I take it to a potluck, it's always one of the first things to disappear.
—Louise Harding, Newburgh, New York

- **1 package (6 ounces) lime gelatin**
- **1 cup boiling water**
- **1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- **1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **1 can (15 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained**
- **1 can (8 ounces) crushed pineapple, drained**
- **1 cup lemon-lime soda**
- **1/2 cup chopped pecans**
- **1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed, *divided***

Dissolve gelatin in water. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Stir in gelatin mixture and beat until smooth. Stir in vanilla, oranges, pineapple, soda and pecans. Chill until mixture mounds slightly when dropped from a spoon. Fold in three-fourths of the whipped topping.

Pour into a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. dish. Refrigerate for 3-4 hours or until firm. Cut into squares; garnish with the remaining whipped topping. **Yield:** 16-20 servings.



Ruby Apple Salad

(Pictured above)

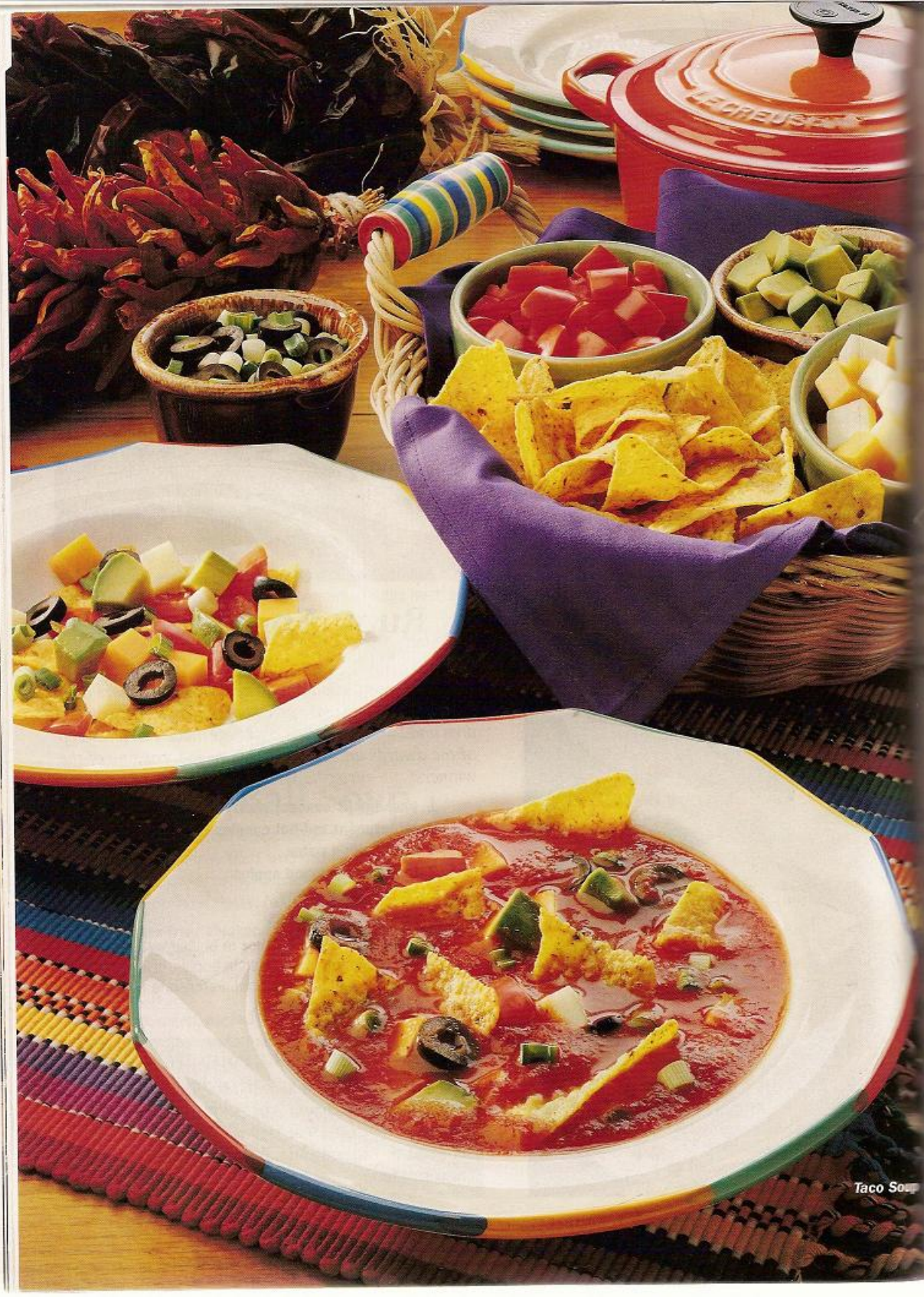
This is a pretty salad and tastes good, too. Years ago, there used to be local apple contests that my two children and I would enter. One year we made a clean sweep of the awards and I believe this recipe was one of the winners! —Priscilla Weaver, Hagerstown, Maryland

- **1 package (3 ounces) cherry gelatin**
- **2 tablespoons red-hot candies**
- **1-3/4 cups boiling water**
- **1-1/2 to 2 cups chopped apples**
- **1/2 cup chopped celery**
- **1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

In a bowl, stir gelatin and candies in boiling water until dissolved. Chill until partially set. Fold in apples, celery and walnuts. Pour into a 1-qt. serving bowl. Refrigerate until firm, at least 4 hours. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Pineapple Pointer

An enzyme in pineapple (also in figs, guava, kiwifruit and papaya) can prevent gelatin from setting properly. Heat destroys the enzyme, so cooked or canned pineapple can be used in gelatin mixtures.



Taco Soup

Taco Soup

(Pictured at left)

This is a fun dish to serve when entertaining. Folks can fill their bowls with whatever garnish ingredients they like and then top it with the soup. It's like a taco in a bowl! —*Tammie Lightner, Bynum, Montana*

- **2 cans (28 ounces *each*) diced tomatoes, undrained**
- **1 quart water**
- **1 tablespoon chicken bouillon granules**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons chili powder**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cumin**
- **8 ounces Monterey Jack *or* cheddar cheese, cubed**
- **1 medium tomato, chopped**
- **1 medium avocado, chopped**
- **1 can (2-1/4 ounces) sliced ripe olives, drained**
- **1/4 cup sliced green onions**
- **3 cups tortilla chips**

In a blender or food processor, puree tomatoes until smooth; pour into a 3-qt. saucepan. Add the water, bouillon, chili powder and cumin; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20 minutes.

In soup bowls, layer cheese, tomato, avocado, olives, onions and chips. Top with hot soup and serve immediately. **Yield:** 8 servings (2 quarts).

Turkey Mornay

This recipe proves that leftover holiday turkey doesn't have to be lifeless! Liven up your extra turkey by serving it with a creamy Swiss cheese sauce and tender asparagus over toasted bread. —*Shirley Nowicki, Temperance, Michigan*

- **3 tablespoons butter**
- **3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 cups milk**
- **3/4 cup shredded Swiss cheese**
- **4 slices white bread, toasted**
- **4 slices cooked turkey breast**
- **1 can (15 ounces) asparagus spears, drained**
- **2 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese**

In a saucepan over medium heat, cook butter, flour, salt and pepper until smooth. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Add Swiss cheese; stir until melted.

Place bread in a shallow baking pan; top with turkey, asparagus and 1/2 cup sauce. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Broil 5 in. from the heat for 4-6 minutes or until browned and bubbly. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Swedish Potato Dumpling Soup

Family and friends gather around our table throughout the year to enjoy good company and great food. As part of our traditional Christmas Eve meal, I serve this hearty soup. —*Margaret Peterson, Genoa, Nebraska*

- **1 broiler-fryer chicken (3-1/2 to 4 pounds), cut up**
- **6-1/2 cups water**
- **2 teaspoons salt, optional**
- **2 celery ribs, quartered**
- **1 medium carrot, quartered**
- **1 small onion, peeled**
- **4 whole peppercorns**
- **2 whole cloves**
- **2 whole allspice**
- **2 chicken bouillon cubes**
- **1 package (10 ounces) frozen green beans**
- **1 package (12 ounces) frozen noodles**

DUMPLINGS:

- **2 medium potatoes, cooked and mashed (without added milk *or* butter)**
- **1 egg, beaten**
- **2 tablespoons half-and-half cream**
- **1 teaspoon sugar**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt, optional**
- **1/2 cup all-purpose flour**

In a 5-qt. soup kettle, combine the first 10 ingredients. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 3 hours. Remove chicken; allow to cool.

Strain broth, discarding vegetables and seasonings. Add enough water to make 8 cups; return to kettle. Debone chicken and cut into chunks; add to kettle with beans and noodles. Bring to a boil; cook for 20 minutes.

For dumplings, mix potatoes, egg, cream, sugar and salt if desired in a medium bowl. Gradually add flour to make a stiff batter (it should form a peak when spoon is lifted). Drop by teaspoons into boiling soup. Cover and simmer for 3 minutes. **Yield:** 12 servings (3 quarts).

Cranberry Mousse

(Pictured above)

This is a delicious and pretty salad for the holidays, but it's so good that I serve it other times, too. I got the recipe from a neighbor who had served it with a traditional turkey dinner. *—Helen Clement, Hemet, California*

- **1 package (6 ounces) strawberry gelatin**
- **1 cup boiling water**
- **1 can (20 ounces) crushed pineapple, undrained**
- **1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce**
- **3 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **1 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- **2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream**
- **1/2 cup chopped pecans**

In a large bowl, dissolve gelatin in boiling water. Drain pineapple, reserving the juice. Set pineapple aside. Add juice to gelatin. Stir in cranberry sauce, lemon juice, peel and nutmeg. Chill until mixture begins to thicken. Fold in sour cream, pineapple and pecans.

Pour into a glass serving bowl or a 9-cup mold that has been coated with nonstick cooking spray. Chill for 2 hours or until set. **Yield:** 16-20 servings.

Herbed Chicken Soup

I love cooking and turning a recipe into my own personal creation. This soup is one I developed gradually over the years. *—Myrna Huebert, Tofield, Alberta*

- **1 broiler-fryer chicken (3 to 3-1/2 pounds), cut**
- **2-1/2 quarts water**
- **4 medium carrots, cut into 1/2-inch pieces**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1/2 cup chopped celery**
- **5 chicken bouillon cubes**
- **2 tablespoons dried parsley flakes**
- **1 tablespoon dried thyme**
- **1 teaspoon *each* dried sage and poultry seasoni**
- **1 teaspoon salt, optional**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **1 large bay leaf**
- **1 package (12 ounces) frozen noodles *or* 2 cups cooked noodles**

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, place the first 12 ingredi Cover and bring to a boil; skim fat. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1-1/2 hours or until chicken is tender.

Remove chicken; allow to cool. Debone and cut chunks. Skim fat from broth; bring to a boil. Return chicke kettle. Add frozen noodles and cook for 20 minutes or unti der, or add cooked noodles and heat through. Remove ba **Yield:** 16 servings (4 quarts).

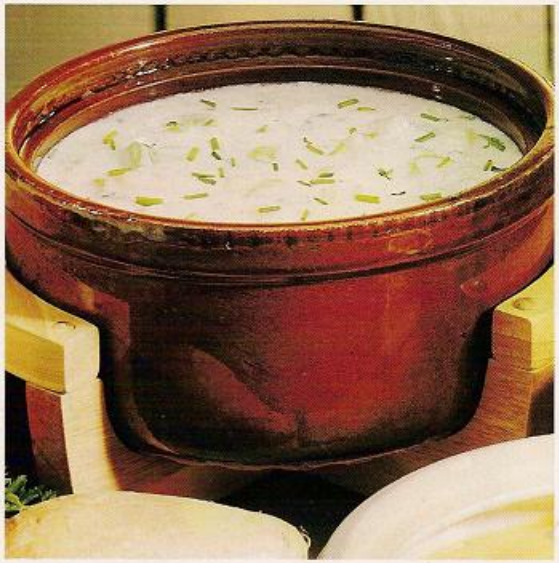
Meatless Minestrone

This recipe for traditional Italian soup may have a few ingredients, but it couldn't be easier to prep Plus it's packed with flavor and nutrition.

—Margaret Shauers, Great Bend, Ka

- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **3/4 cup sliced celery**
- **2 medium carrots, sliced**
- **3 tablespoons butter**
- **2 cans (14-1/2 ounces *each*) stewed tomatoes**
- **2 cans (14-1/2 ounces *each*) chicken broth**
- **2 cups water**
- **4 cups shredded cabbage**
- **1 medium potato, peeled and diced**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 tablespoon dried basil**
- **2-1/4 teaspoons dried oregano**
- **2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **Pinch cayenne pepper**
- **1 can (16 ounces) kidney beans, rinsed and drai**
- **1/2 cup cooked rice**

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, saute onion, celery and carrots in butter until vegetables are tender. Add tomatoes, broth, water, cabbage, potato and seasonings; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1 hour. Stir in beans and rice; heat through. **Yield:** 9 servings (2-1/4 quarts).



Chunky Potato Soup

(Pictured above)

This special soup is a true family favorite. I received the recipe from my sister and then passed it on to my daughters. It's perfect served with leftover ham.

—Betty Ann Walery, Joplin, Montana

- **2 cups water**
- **2 chicken bouillon cubes**
- **3 cups cubed peeled potatoes**
- **1/2 cup chopped onion**
- **1/2 cup thinly sliced celery**
- **3/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 cups milk, *divided***
- **2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- **2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley**
- **1 tablespoon chopped chives**

In a 3-qt. saucepan over medium heat, combine water, bouillon, potatoes, onion, celery, salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Add 1-3/4 cups milk.

Combine flour with remaining milk; stir to form a smooth paste. Add to soup, stirring constantly. Bring to a boil; boil and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly. Add a small amount of hot liquid to sour cream; stir to mix. Gradually add to soup, stirring constantly; heat through but do not boil. Add parsley and chives just before serving. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Festive Fruit Salad

(Pictured below)

This fruit salad disappears fast down to the last spoonful. The light dressing doesn't hide the refreshing flavors of the fruit. Pecans add crunch and the rich flavor of the harvest season.

—Julianne Johnson
Grove City, Minnesota

- **1 can (20 ounces) pineapple chunks**
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- **1 egg, lightly beaten**
- **2 cans (11 ounces *each*) mandarin oranges, drained**
- **1 can (20 ounces) pears, drained and chopped**
- **3 kiwifruit, peeled and sliced**
- **2 large unpeeled apples, chopped**
- **1 cup pecan halves**

Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Set pineapple aside. Pour juice into a small saucepan; add sugar and flour. Bring to a boil. Whisk in egg. Cook and stir over medium heat until thermometer reaches 160° and mixture is thickened. Cool completely. In a large bowl, combine pineapple, oranges, pears, kiwi, apples and pecans. Pour dressing over and blend well. Cover and chill for 1 hour. **Yield:** 12-16 servings.

Top to bottom: Reuben Deli Sandwiches and French Onion-Beef Strudel.

Reuben Deli Sandwiches

(Pictured at left)

Here's a new twist on the classic Reuben sandwich. The filling is easy to prepare and keeps well in the fridge. Add a salad and dessert, and you have a delicious lunch.
—Gigi LaFave Ryan, Longmont, Colorado

- **3/4 cup mayonnaise**
- **1 tablespoon chili sauce**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons prepared mustard**
- **1/4 teaspoon prepared horseradish**
- **1 can (14 ounces) sauerkraut, rinsed and well drained**
- **3/4 pound finely chopped corned beef (about 3 cups)**
- **2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese**
- **30 slices rye bread**
- **1/2 cup butter, softened**

In a large bowl, combine mayonnaise, chili sauce, mustard and horseradish. Stir in sauerkraut, corned beef and Swiss cheese. Spread 1/3 cup on 15 slices of bread; top with remaining bread. Lightly butter the outsides of bread. Toast sandwiches on a hot griddle for 4-5 minutes per side or until golden brown. **Yield:** 15 servings.

French Onion-Beef Strudel

(Pictured at left)

I prepared this flavorful strudel for my craft club meeting, and everyone asked me for the recipe. It makes such a nice presentation, so it's great to serve at gatherings. *—Sherry Keethler, Lake St. Louis, Missouri*

- **1 loaf (1 pound) frozen bread dough, thawed**
- **2 cups thinly sliced onion**
- **1/4 cup butter**
- **6 ounces beef tenderloin *or* sirloin steak (1 inch thick)**
- **1 teaspoon all-purpose flour**
- **1 teaspoon brown sugar**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cumin**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/2 cup beef broth**
- **3/4 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese**
- **6 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, *divided***
- **1 can (10 ounces) beef au jus gravy**

Allow dough to rise until nearly doubled. Meanwhile, in a skillet, saute onion in butter over low heat for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. With a slotted spoon, remove onion from skillet; set aside. Cut beef into 1/8-in. slices; add to skillet. Increase heat to medium; cook and stir for 3 minutes or until browned.

Return onion to skillet. Stir in flour, brown sugar, cumin, salt and pepper. Add broth; cook and stir for 6-8 minutes or until liquid has evaporated. Remove from the heat.

Punch dough down; roll on a floured surface to a 16-in. x 12-in. rectangle. Place on a greased baking sheet. Place beef mixture down the center of the long side of the dough. Sprinkle with Monterey Jack cheese and 4 tablespoons Parmesan cheese.

With a sharp knife, cut dough on each side of beef filling into 1-3/4-in.-wide strips. Fold strips alternately across filling. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 30 minutes. Bake at 375° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Heat gravy; serve as a dipping sauce. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Cranberry Waldorf Salad

Cranberries grow in the coastal area about 50 miles from our home. When they become available at Thanksgiving, I always make this lovely holiday salad.
—Faye Huff, Longview, Washington

- **1/2 pound fresh *or* frozen cranberries, halved**
- **3/4 cup sugar**
- **3 cups miniature marshmallows**
- **2 cups chopped apples**
- **1/2 cup chopped nuts**
- **1 can (8 ounces) pineapple tidbits, drained**
- **1 cup halved seedless grapes**
- **1 cup heavy whipping cream, stiffly beaten**

In a large mixing bowl, combine cranberries and sugar; let stand 30 minutes. Add next five ingredients; mix well. Gently fold in whipped cream. Chill until serving. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

Winter Cabbage Salad

(Pictured at page 67)

My mother made this recipe for as long as I can remember. She'd serve it as a vegetable, salad or garnish at family meals, ladies' church luncheons and potluck parties. —Eleanor Shuknecht, Elba, New York

- **2 cups cider vinegar**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **2 tablespoons salt**
- **1 tablespoon mustard seed**
- **3/4 teaspoon celery seed**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric**
- **10 cups thinly sliced cabbage (about 2-1/4 pounds)**
- **3 medium onions, thinly sliced**
- **2 medium sweet red peppers, thinly sliced**
- **1 medium green pepper, thinly sliced**

In a saucepan, bring the first six ingredients to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to cool. In a large bowl, combine cabbage, onions and peppers. Pour vinegar mixture over vegetables and stir to coat. Cover and refrigerate overnight. **Yield:** 16-20 servings.

Italian Submarine Sandwich

I first sampled this at a dinner where it was served as an appetizer, and I almost didn't have room for the main course! Since then, it's become one of our family's standard sandwiches. —Susan Brown, Richland, Washington

- **2 jars (2 ounces *each*) diced pimientos, drained**
- **1 can (4-1/4 ounces) chopped ripe olives**
- **2/3 cup chopped stuffed olives**
- **1/2 cup olive oil**
- **1/2 cup minced fresh parsley**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 teaspoon dried oregano**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1 loaf (1 pound) Italian bread**
- **1/3 pound thinly sliced fully cooked ham**
- **1/3 pound thinly sliced Genoa salami**
- **1/3 pound thinly sliced provolone *or* mozzarella cheese**

In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the pimientos, olives, oil, parsley, garlic, oregano and pepper. Refrigerate for at least 12 hours. Cut bread in half lengthwise; hollow out top and bottom, leaving a 1-in. shell. (Discard removed bread or save for another use.)

Drain 2 tablespoons liquid from olive mixture; spread on the inside of bread top. Spoon 1 cup olive mixture evenly into bottom of bread shell.

Layer with ham, salami and cheese; spread with remaining olive mixture. Replace bread top. Slice into serving-size pieces. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Texas Turkey Soup

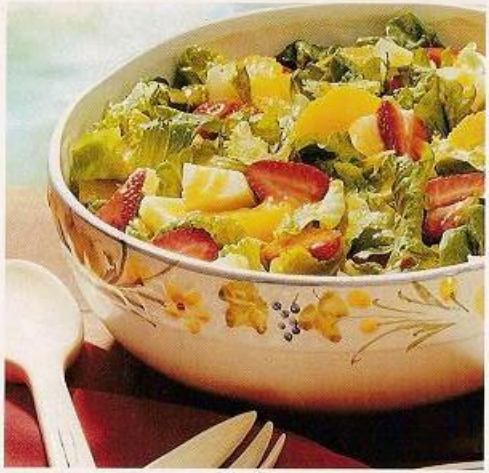
I'm not really fond of soup, so I was a little hesitant to try this recipe. But after some adjustments over the years, I've come to love this one-of-a-kind turkey soup. It really warms you on a chilly day. —Betty Bakas, Lakehills, Texas

- **2 quarts turkey broth**
- **4 cups cubed cooked turkey**
- **2 large white onions, halved**
- **2 celery ribs, sliced**
- **3 medium carrots, sliced**
- **1 cup *each* frozen corn, cut green beans and peas**
- **2 bay leaves**
- **1/2 to 1 teaspoon dried tarragon**
- **3/4 teaspoon garlic powder**
- **1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**
- **Salt and pepper to taste**
- **1-1/2 cups uncooked noodles**
- **1 tablespoon cornstarch**
- **1 tablespoon water**

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, combine broth, turkey, onions, celery, carrots, corn, beans, peas, bay leaves, tarragon, garlic powder, pepper sauce, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20-30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Return to a boil; add noodles.

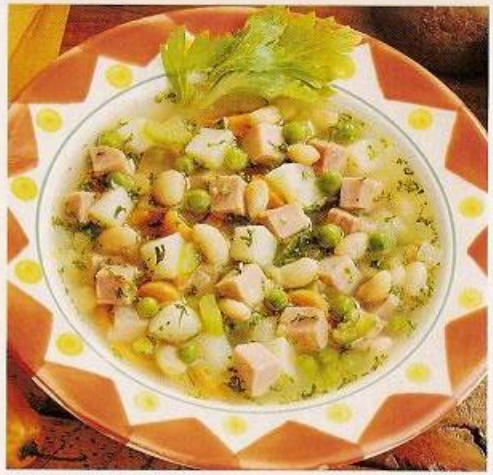
Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until noodles are tender. Combine cornstarch and water until smooth; add to soup. Bring to a boil; boil for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove bay leaves. **Yield:** 10-12 servings (3 quarts).

Favorite Fruit Salad



I spend a lot of time in the kitchen, especially when our four children and nine grandchildren come to visit. This salad is always requested when they're here for dinner. —Doris Dion
Lake Ozark, Missouri

Ham and Bean Soup

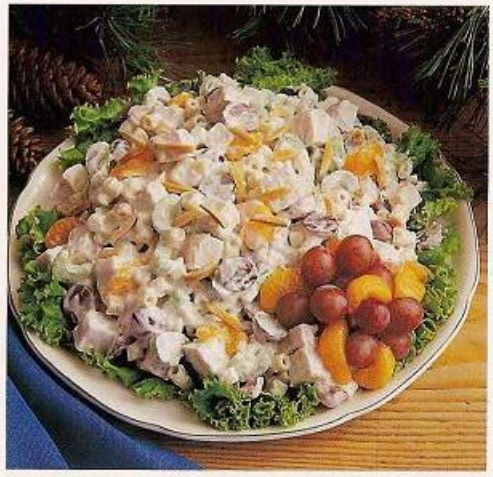


When I was a cook in a restaurant years ago, this was our best-selling soup. One taste and your family will agree it's a winner!
—Mary Detweiler
West Farmington, Ohio

Marvelous Mushroom Soup

Soup is tops on the list of things I love to cook. When we had a small restaurant in Arizona, I made this mushroom soup every day. We never had any left over. It got raves at a deli I worked at, too.
—Beverly Rafferty
Winston, Oregon

Turkey Mandarin Salad



A refreshing, interesting combination of turkey, pasta and fruit with a lightly sweet dressing makes this a family favorite. I found the recipe in an old church cookbook years ago.—Bernice Smith
Sturgeon Lake, Minnesota

Marvelous Mushroom Soup

- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon dried tarragon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces *each*) beef broth
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- 1/2 cup half-and-half cream
- 1/2 cup evaporated milk
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- Dash hot pepper sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, saute the mushrooms, onion, garlic, tarragon and nutmeg in butter until vegetables are tender. Stir in flour until smooth. Gradually add broth; bring to a boil, stirring constantly.

Reduce heat to low; slowly add sour cream. Cook and stir until smooth. Stir in cream and milk. Add lemon juice, hot pepper sauce, salt and pepper. Heat through but do not boil. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Turkey Mandarin Salad

- 2 cups cubed cooked turkey
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup seedless red grape halves
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 can (15 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained
- 1 cup cooked macaroni
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- 3/4 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped
- 1/3 cup slivered almonds
- Toasted almonds, optional

In a large bowl, combine turkey, onion and salt; mix well. Add grapes, celery, oranges and macaroni; toss lightly to mix. Cover and refrigerate.

Just before serving, combine mayonnaise and whipped cream; fold into salad along with almonds. Top with toasted almonds if desired. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Favorite Fruit Salad

- 1/4 cup *each* grapefruit, orange and pineapple juice
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1/4 cup vinegar
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 to 3 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 8 cups torn iceberg lettuce
- 6 cups torn Bibb lettuce
- 3 cups orange sections
- 3 cups fresh pineapple chunks
- 3 cups sliced fresh strawberries

In a saucepan, stir juices and cornstarch until smooth. Bring to a boil over medium heat; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Cool to room temperature. Add vinegar, oil, garlic, sugar, mustard, salt, paprika and nutmeg; stir to mix. Cover and chill.

In a salad bowl, toss lettuces, oranges, pineapple and strawberries. Pour dressing over salad and toss; serve immediately. **Yield:** 12-14 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Ham and Bean Soup

- 3/4 pound fully cooked ham, cubed
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 cans (16 ounces *each*) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup diced peeled potatoes
- 3/4 cup diced carrots
- 3/4 cup diced celery
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 cup frozen peas
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley

In a 3-qt. saucepan, saute ham, onion and garlic in butter until onion is tender. Add the next seven ingredients; cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add peas and cook for 5 minutes. Add parsley. **Yield:** 8 servings (about 2 quarts).

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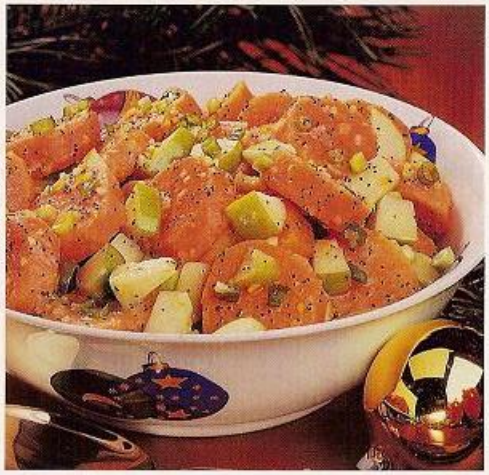
Sweet Potato Apple Salad



Pairing a seasonal fruit and vegetable makes for a very pretty and unusual salad to accompany a turkey dinner. The poppy seed dressing has a citrus tang and really brings out the flavor.

—Dorothy Smith
El Dorado, Arkansas

Bacon-Swiss Tossed Salad

This recipe came from a cookbook compiled by the women of our church in my hometown of Chico, California. It's pretty and tasty. Best of all, it can be put together a couple of hours before serving. When it's time, a simple toss and it's ready. *—Cathee Bethel*
Philomath, Oregon

Creamy Turkey Soup

My mother often prepared a turkey much larger than our family could ever eat in one meal so there'd be plenty of leftovers. That's one tradition I've kept up so I have plenty left to make this hearty soup.

—Kathleen Harris
Galesburg, Illinois

Anise Fruit Salad

The thing I like best about fruit salads is you can change the ingredients based on what fruits are in season. Here, a subtle anise flavor highlights a bounty of fresh fruit.

—Jean Clause
Lago Vista, Texas

Creamy Turkey Soup

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 celery ribs with leaves, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 6 tablespoons butter
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon *each* dried thyme, savory and parsley flakes
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- 4 cups cubed cooked turkey
- 5 medium carrots, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1 to 2 cups turkey *or* chicken broth
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas

In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, saute onion and celery in butter until vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir in the flour and seasonings; gradually add milk, stirring constantly until thickened.

Add turkey and carrots. Add enough broth until soup is desired consistency. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes. Add peas; cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender. **Yield:** 6-8 servings (2 quarts).

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Anise Fruit Salad

- 2 cups water
- 1-1/2 cups sugar
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon aniseed
- 6 cups cubed honeydew
- 4 cups cubed fresh pineapple
- 2-1/2 cups cubed cantaloupe
- 2 cups seedless green grapes
- 2 cups seedless red grapes
- 2 cups cubed orange sections
- 1 cup sliced fresh strawberries
- 1 medium firm banana, sliced
- 2 kiwifruit, peeled and sliced

In a saucepan over medium-high heat, combine water, sugar, lemon juice and aniseed; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, uncovered, for 40 minutes or until mixture is slightly thickened and reduced by one-third (about 1-1/2 cups). Remove from the heat; cover and cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine honeydew, pineapple, cantaloupe, grapes and oranges. Pour anise mixture over fruit; toss to coat. Cover; chill for at least 1 hour. Just before serving, add strawberries and banana; gently toss. Garnish with kiwi. **Yield:** 12-14 servings.

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Sweet Potato Apple Salad

- 6 medium sweet potatoes (about 2-1/2 pounds)
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
- 1-1/2 teaspoons poppy seeds
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 2 medium tart apples (about 3/4 pound), chopped

In a large saucepan, cook sweet potatoes in boiling salted water until just tender, about 20 minutes. Cool completely. Meanwhile, in a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the next nine ingredients; shake well.

Peel potatoes; cut each in half lengthwise, then into 1/2-in. slices. In a 4-qt. bowl, layer a fourth of the sweet potatoes, apples and onions; drizzle with a fourth of the salad dressing. Repeat layers three times. Refrigerate for 1-2 hours. Toss before serving. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Bacon-Swiss Tossed Salad

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 6 cups mixed salad greens
- 1 medium red onion, sliced
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas, thawed
- 8 ounces sliced Swiss cheese, julienned
- 1 pound bacon, cooked and crumbled

In a small bowl, combine mayonnaise, sugar, salt and pepper. In a large salad bowl, layer a third of the greens and a third of the mayonnaise mixture, onion, peas and cheese. Repeat the layers twice. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Just before serving, add the bacon and toss. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Butternut Squash Bisque

- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch cubes (about 4 cups), *divided*
- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick (3 inches)
- 1 cup sliced leeks (white portion only)
- 1 medium tart apple, peeled and chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup butter
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1/3 cup heavy whipping cream
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

In a roasting pan, toss 3 cups of squash, orange juice and brown sugar; add cinnamon. Cover and bake at 450° for 30-40 minutes or until squash is tender. Discard cinnamon; drain squash, reserving cooking liquid. Set squash and liquid aside.

In a Dutch oven, saute leeks, apple and onion in butter until tender. Add broth; bring to a boil. Stir in cooked squash; cook for 5 minutes. Add cream, salt and pepper; heat through. Cool slightly. In a blender or food processor, process soup in batches until smooth. Return all to the pan; heat through (do not boil).

Cut remaining squash into 1/4-in. cubes. In a skillet, saute squash cubes in oil and reserved cooking liquid until squash is tender and liquid has evaporated. Ladle soup into bowls. Garnish with squash cubes. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Green Salad with Dill Dressing

- 1 head Boston lettuce, torn
- 1/2 bunch romaine, torn
- 4 green onions, sliced
- 3 radishes, sliced
- 1 large green pepper, cut into strips
- 1 large tomato, diced
- 1 carrot, shredded
- 1 small cucumber, sliced

DILL DRESSING:

- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons sour cream
- 2 teaspoons dill weed
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

In a large bowl, combine the first eight ingredients. Refrigerate. For dressing, whisk the vinegar and mustard in a small bowl. Whisk in remaining ingredients. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Stir well before serving with the salad. **Yield:** 8 servings (about 3/4 cup dressing).

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Festive Potato Salad

- 8 medium red potatoes, cooked and cubed
- 2 celery ribs with leaves, thinly sliced
- 2 green onions with tops, chopped
- 4 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 1/2 cup chopped peeled cucumber
- 1/4 cup chopped sweet red pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped green pepper
- 1-1/4 cups mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon *each* minced fresh basil, marjoram and dill *or* 1 teaspoon *each* dried basil, marjoram and dill weed
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 4 plum tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese

In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. In another bowl, combine the mayonnaise, sour cream, yogurt and seasonings. Pour over potato mixture; toss to coat. Gently stir in tomatoes, peas and cheese. Cover and refrigerate until serving. **Yield:** 14 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Fruited Wild Rice Salad

DRESSING:

- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons honey

SALAD:

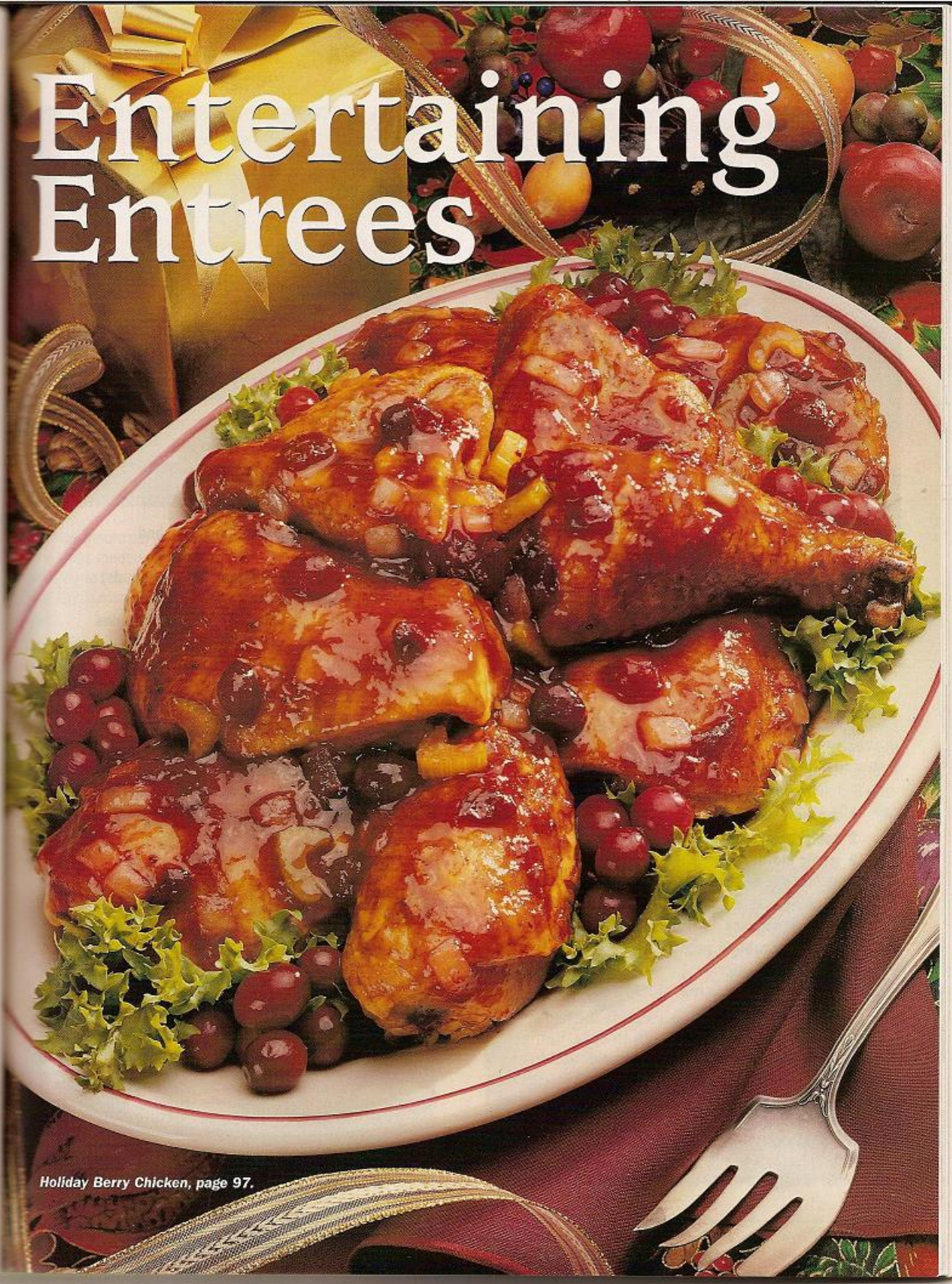
- 1 cup uncooked wild rice
- 2 medium apples, chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 1 cup seedless red grapes, halved
- 2 tablespoons *each* minced fresh mint, parsley and chives
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup pecan halves

Combine dressing ingredients; set aside. Cook rice according to package directions; drain and set aside to cool.

In a large bowl, toss apples with lemon juice. Add raisins, grapes, mint, parsley, chives and rice. Add dressing and toss. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate several hours or overnight. Just before serving, add pecans and toss lightly. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Entertaining Entrees



Holiday Berry Chicken, page 97.

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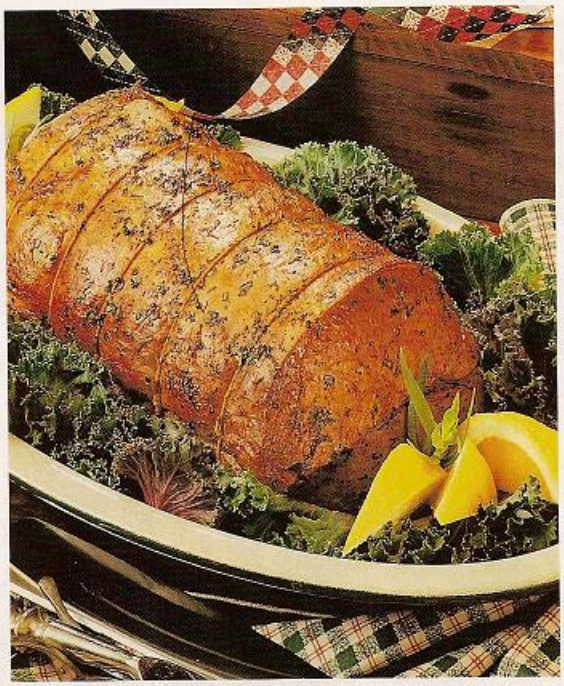


Herbed Pork Roast

(Pictured above)

I received this recipe when we moved to Oklahoma. A going-away party was held for us, and the guests were asked to bring their favorite recipe as a remembrance.
—Elizabeth Area, Stillwater, Oklahoma

- **1 cup soy sauce**
- **2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **2 teaspoons dried tarragon**
- **2 teaspoons dried basil**
- **1 teaspoon chives**
- **1 teaspoon rubbed sage**
- **1 teaspoon pepper**
- **1 boneless pork loin roast (3-1/2 to 4 pounds)**

In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the first eight ingredients. Add roast; seal and turn to coat. Refrigerate overnight, turning bag several times. Remove roast from bag and place in the roasting pan; pour marinade over roast. Cover the pan and bake at 325° for 2 to 2-1/2 hours or until a thermometer reads 160°. Let stand 15 minutes before slicing. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Editor's Note: If using a plastic oven bag, add 1 tablespoon flour to bag and shake to coat. Add marinade and roast. Place in a shallow roasting pan; refrigerate. Before roast[ing] make several 1/2-in. slits in top of bag. Bake, uncovered [at] 325° for 2 to 2-1/2 hours.

Standing Rib Roast

(Pictured below)

Treat your family to tender slices of standing rib roa[st] or use the seasoning blend on a different beef roast [for] a hearty, delicious main dish. I love to prepare th[is] recipe for special occasions. *—Lucy Mey[r] Walden, Colora[do]*

- **1 tablespoon lemon-pepper seasoning**
- **1 tablespoon paprika**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons garlic salt**
- **1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed**
- **1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- **1 standing beef rib roast (6 to 7 pounds)**
- **2 cups boiling water**
- **1 teaspoon instant beef bouillon granules**

Combine lemon-pepper, paprika, garlic salt, rosemary [and] cayenne pepper; rub over roast. Place roast with fat side [up] in a large roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, at 325° until [a] reaches desired doneness. Allow 23-25 minutes per pound [for] rare (140° on a meat thermometer), 27-30 minutes [for] medium (160°) and 32-35 minutes for well-done (170°).

Remove to serving platter and keep warm. Let stand [15]

minutes before carving. Pour meat juices from roasting pan into a glass measuring cup; skim off fat. Add boiling water and bouillon to roasting pan and stir to loosen browned bits from pan. Stir in meat juices. Serve with the roast. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

Roasted Chicken With Rosemary

(Pictured above)

This is a lot like pot roast, only it uses chicken instead of beef. The rosemary gives it a sweet taste and blends well with the garlic, butter and parsley.

—Isabel Zienkosky, Salt Lake City, Utah

- **1/2 cup butter**
- **2 tablespoons dried rosemary**
- **2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- **1 whole roasting chicken (5 to 6 pounds)**
- **8 small red potatoes, halved**
- **6 carrots, cut into 2-inch pieces and halved lengthwise**
- **2 medium onions, quartered**

In a small saucepan, melt butter. Add rosemary, parsley, garlic, salt and pepper. Place chicken on a rack in a roasting pan; tie drumsticks together. Spoon half of the butter mixture over chicken. Place the potatoes, carrots and onions around chicken. Drizzle remaining butter mixture over vegetables. Cover and bake at 350° for 1-1/2 hours, basting every 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 1 hour longer or until juices run clear, basting occasionally. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Turkey in a Hurry

(Pictured below)

This dish is easy to prepare and really brings some variety to mealtime. It's a delicious way to fix turkey, which cooks up moist and tasty. My husband, our two daughters and I all enjoy it. *—Denise Goedeken*
Platte Center, Nebraska

- **2 turkey tenderloins (1-1/2 pounds)**
- **1/4 cup butter**
- **3/4 teaspoon dried thyme**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed**
- **1/4 teaspoon paprika**
- **1/8 teaspoon garlic powder**

Cut tenderloins in half lengthwise, then into serving-size pieces. Place on rack of broiler pan. In a small saucepan, heat remaining ingredients until butter is melted. Broil turkey until lightly browned on one side. Brush with the herb butter; turn and brown the other side. Brush with butter. Cook 6-8 minutes longer or until turkey juices run clear, basting often with butter. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Top to bottom: Vegetable Pork Chop Dinner, Tangy Glazed Ham and Stuffed Pork Chops.

Stuffed Pork Chops

(Pictured at left)

My version of stuffed chops stems from a recipe for stuffed mushrooms. —Sheri Smith
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

- **1-1/2 cups chopped fresh mushrooms**
- **4 green onions, finely chopped**
- **1/3 cup finely chopped celery**
- **1 tablespoon butter**
- **1 small tomato, chopped**
- **1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon dried marjoram**
- **1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt**
- **1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 slices day-old white bread, cut into 1/4-inch cubes**
- **4 pork chops (1 to 1-1/2 inches thick)**

In a skillet over medium heat, saute mushrooms, onions and celery in butter until tender. Add the tomato, marjoram, garlic salt and pepper; cook and stir for 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in bread cubes.

Cut a large pocket in the side of each chop. Stuff mushroom mixture into pockets. Place chops in an ungreased shallow baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 1 hour or until juices run clear. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Vegetable Pork Chop Dinner

(Pictured at left)

My family loves these savory chops served with mashed potatoes and salad. This meal is perfect for cold winter evenings. —MaryAnn Stoppini, Elmhurst, Pennsylvania

- **1 pound carrots, julienned**
- **1 medium onion, sliced**
- **1/2 cup raisins**
- **3 tablespoons olive oil**
- **8 pork chops (3/4 inch thick)**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/8 teaspoon paprika**

Layer carrots, onion and raisins in a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish; drizzle with oil. Cover; bake at 325° for 15 minutes. Sprinkle pork chops with salt, pepper and paprika; place over vegetables. Cover; bake for 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 20 minutes longer or until pork juices run clear. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Tangy Glazed Ham

(Pictured at left)

After unsuccessfully looking for a satisfying glaze recipe, my daughter and I came up with this version. It's a simple way to dress up any ham you prepare.
—Florence McCray, Johnson City, Tennessee

- **1 boneless fully cooked ham (3 pounds)**
- **1/2 cup sweet-and-sour sauce**
- **1/4 cup light corn syrup**
- **3 tablespoons zesty Italian salad dressing**

Place ham in an 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Pour remaining ingredients over ham in the order listed. Bake, uncovered, at 325°, basting occasionally, for 1-1/4 to 1-1/2 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 140°. **Yield:** 12 servings.

Sicilian Meat Roll

The addition of ham and mozzarella is a colorful surprise and adds terrific flavor to this meat.
—Mrs. W.G. Dougherty, Crawfordsville, Indiana

- **2 eggs**
- **1/2 cup tomato juice**
- **3/4 teaspoon dried oregano**
- **2 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 pounds ground beef**
- **3/4 cup soft bread crumbs**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- **8 thin slices fully cooked ham**
- **1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded mozzarella cheese**
- **3 thin slices mozzarella cheese**

In a large bowl, combine eggs, tomato juice, oregano, garlic, salt and pepper. Add beef, bread crumbs and parsley; mix well. On a piece of heavy-duty foil, pat meat mixture into a 12-in. x 10-in. rectangle.

Place the ham and shredded cheese on loaf to within 1/2 in. of edges. Roll up, jelly-roll style, beginning with short end; peel foil away while rolling. Place on a greased baking pan with seam side down; seal ends.

Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 70 minutes or until beef is no longer pink. Top with sliced cheese; bake 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Wild Rice Harvest Casserole

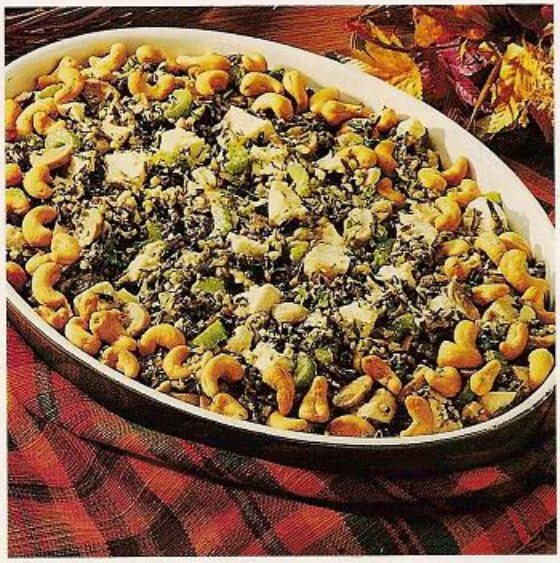
(Pictured below)

Winter is the ideal time to enjoy a big helping of this hearty casserole, packed with wild rice and chicken and topped with cashews. —*Julianne Johnson*
Grove City, Minnesota

- **4 to 5 cups diced cooked chicken**
- **1 cup chopped celery**
- **2 tablespoons butter**
- **2 cans (10-3/4 ounces *each*) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- **2 cups chicken broth**
- **1 jar (4-1/2 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained**
- **1 small onion, chopped**
- **1 cup uncooked wild rice, rinsed and drained**
- **1/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning**
- **3/4 cup cashew pieces**
- **Chopped fresh parsley**

In a skillet, brown chicken and celery in butter. In a large bowl, combine soup and broth until smooth. Add the mushrooms, onion, rice, poultry seasoning and chicken mixture.

Pour into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Cover and bake at 350° for 1 hour. Uncover and bake for 30 minutes. Stir; sprinkle with cashews. Bake 15 minutes longer or until the rice is tender. Garnish with parsley. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.



Turkey Drumstick Dinner

(Pictured above)

I discovered this recipe a long time ago and love it s... it uses tasty turkey drumsticks. Our family and frie... enjoy this savory meat and potatoes meal.
—Alice Balliet, Kane, Pennsylva...

- **4 uncooked turkey drumsticks (about 3 pounds)**
- **2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **1 tablespoon butter**
- **1 medium onion, sliced**
- **1 can (14-1/2 ounces) stewed tomatoes**
- **3 chicken bouillon cubes**
- **1 teaspoon garlic salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried oregano**
- **1/2 teaspoon dried basil**
- **4 large potatoes, peeled, cooked and quartered**
- **2 medium zucchini, cut into 3/4-inch slices**
- **2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- **2 tablespoons water**
- **Snipped fresh parsley**

In a large skillet, brown drumsticks in oil and butter. Place ... a 3-qt. Dutch oven. Top with onion slices. In the same skil... heat tomatoes, bouillon and seasonings until bouillon is d... solved. Pour over the drumsticks. Cover and bake at 325° ... 2 hours, basting once or twice.

Add potatoes and zucchini. Cover and bake for 20 m... utes. Remove drumsticks and vegetables to a serving dish a... keep warm. Combine the cornstarch and water until smoo... stir into tomato mixture. Return to the oven, uncovered, ... 10-15 minutes or until slightly thickened. Pour over drumst... and vegetables. Sprinkle with parsley. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Herb-Crusted Chuck Roast

(Pictured below)

This recipe turns an inexpensive cut of beef into a delicious main dish. —*Rita Drewes, Craig, Missouri*

1/4 cup dry bread crumbs
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon ground mustard
1 teaspoon dried savory
1 teaspoon pepper
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
1 boneless chuck eye *or* top blade roast (about 3 pounds)

SAUCE:

1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
3 tablespoons prepared horseradish
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1/4 teaspoon salt

In a bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Rub over entire roast. Place on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 1-1/2 to 2 hours or until meat is tender and reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°). Let stand 10 minutes before carving. Meanwhile, in a bowl, combine the sauce ingredients. Serve with the roast. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Deviled Crab Casserole

(Pictured above)

After creating this recipe, I later pared it down to serve two. I serve this entree often, since it's so easy to assemble. Along with a green salad, dessert and coffee, this casserole makes a delicious lunch or dinner.
—*Helen Bachman, Champaign, Illinois*

1 can (6 ounces) crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed
1 cup dry bread crumbs, *divided*
3/4 cup milk
1/4 cup chopped green onions
2 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/8 teaspoon ground mustard
1/8 teaspoon pepper
6 tablespoons butter, melted, *divided*
Paprika

In a bowl, combine crab, 3/4 cup of bread crumbs, milk, onions, eggs, salt, Worcestershire sauce, mustard and pepper. Add 4 tablespoons of butter; mix well.

Spoon into a greased 1-qt. baking dish. Combine remaining bread crumbs and butter; sprinkle over casserole. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake, uncovered, at 425° for 16-18 minutes or until golden brown and edges are bubbly. **Yield:** 2 servings.

Top to bottom:
Chicken and Chi

Chicken and Asparagus

(Pictured at left)

Fancy foods don't necessarily mean a lot of fuss. These "bundles" are prepared in no time.
—Janet Hill, Sacramento, California

- **4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves**
- **24 fresh asparagus spears, trimmed**
- **1/3 cup Italian salad dressing**
- **2 teaspoons soy sauce**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1/2 teaspoon salt**
- **1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- **2 tablespoons sesame seeds**
- **Hot cooked white and wild rice blend, optional**

Cut each chicken breast half into 1/2-in.-wide strips. Wrap two or three strips around three asparagus spears. Repeat with the remaining chicken and asparagus. Arrange in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish.

Combine salad dressing, soy sauce, ginger, salt and pepper. Pour over the chicken bundles. Cover and bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Uncover; sprinkle with sesame seeds and bake 15 minutes longer or until chicken juices run clear. Serve over rice if desired. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Garlic Pork Roast

Mom cooked for 11 children, so her menus usually featured basic, simple foods. But on New Year's Day, she always treated us to this special pork roast.
—Ruby Williams, Bogalusa, Louisiana

- **1 pork loin roast, backbone loosened (about 5 pounds)**
- **1/2 medium green pepper, finely chopped**
- **1/2 cup thinly sliced green onions**
- **1/2 cup chopped celery**
- **8 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper**

With a sharp knife, cut a deep pocket between each rib on meaty side of roast. Combine green pepper, green onions, celery and garlic; stuff deeply into pockets. Season roast with salt and cayenne pepper. Place roast, rib side down, in a shallow roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 2-3 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 170°. Let stand for 15 minutes before carving. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Fruit-Glazed Roast Chicken

(Pictured at left)

Whenever I want to serve a special meal with a little flair, this is the recipe I reach for. *—Lynn Stromquist, Fridley, Minnesota*

- **2 lemons, quartered**
- **2 broiler-fryer chickens (3 to 3-1/2 pounds *each*)**
- **3/4 cup dried apricots**
- **1/3 cup chicken broth**
- **3 tablespoons cider vinegar**
- **3 tablespoons brown sugar**
- **2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **2 tablespoons golden raisins**
- **1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 cup sugar**
- **1/2 cup water**
- **2 cans (16 ounces *each*) pear halves, drained**
- **1 can (16 ounces) peach halves, drained**
- **1 can (16 ounces) apricot halves, drained**
- **1 cup pitted prunes**
- **Lemon leaves, optional**

Place four lemon quarters in body cavity of each chicken; close cavities with skewers or string. Place chickens, breast side up, on a rack in a large roasting pan; bake at 375° for 1-1/2 hours.

Meanwhile, in a food processor or blender, combine dried apricots, broth, vinegar, brown sugar, lemon juice, raisins, ginger and salt. Process until smooth; set aside.

In a small saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to medium; cook, uncovered, for 7 minutes. In a large bowl, combine pears, peaches, apricots and prunes; pour hot syrup over fruit. Let stand 10 minutes; drain and set aside.

Remove chickens from oven; spread thickly with pureed apricot mixture. Return to oven for 10-15 minutes or until chicken juices run clear. Remove from oven and let stand 10 minutes. Prepare gravy from pan drippings if desired. Place chickens on serving platter; spoon fruit mixture around chickens. Garnish with lemon leaves if desired. Serve with gravy if desired. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Pork Roast With Fruit Sauce

Savory pork roast gets dressed up for the holidays in this tangy sauce. —Dorothy Pritchett, Wills Point, Texas

- **1 pork loin roast with bone (3 to 4 pounds)**
- **1 jar (10 ounces) apple jelly**
- **1 cup apple juice**
- **1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom**
- **3/4 cup chopped dried apricots**
- **1 tablespoon cornstarch**
- **2 tablespoons water**

Place roast on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 1-1/2 hours. In a saucepan, combine apple jelly, apple juice and cardamom; cook and stir over medium heat until smooth and heated through. Set aside 1/2 cup. Brush some of the remaining sauce over roast; bake 40-60 minutes longer or until a meat thermometer reads 160°-170°, brushing with sauce every 20 minutes.

Transfer roast to a serving platter and keep warm. Pour pan drippings into a saucepan. Add apricots and reserved fruit sauce; cook over medium heat until softened, about 5 minutes. Combine the cornstarch and water until smooth; add to apricot mixture. Cook and stir until mixture boils, about 2 minutes. Serve with roast. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

Turkey with Sausage-Pecan Stuffing

(Pictured on cover)

The combination of ingredients makes a fabulous stuffed turkey that's become a tradition. —Keri Scofield Lawson, Fullerton, California

- **4 medium onions**
- **1 pound bulk pork sausage**
- **1 package (15 ounces) golden raisins**
- **1 cup pecan halves**
- **6 celery ribs, diced**
- **1/4 teaspoon *each* dried basil, oregano, curry powder, caraway seeds, poultry seasoning, garlic powder, salt and pepper**
- **2 packages (6 ounces *each*) stuffing mix**
- **2-1/2 cups chicken broth**
- **1 turkey (12 to 14 pounds)**
- **Vegetable oil**

Slice two onions; set aside. Chop remaining onions. In a large skillet, cook sausage and chopped onions until meat is no longer pink. Stir in raisins, pecans, celery and seasonings; simmer for 10 minutes. Add stuffing mixes and broth; mix well. Cook and stir for about 5 minutes. Place reserved onions in turkey cavity. Add 6-7 cups stuffing. (Place remaining stuffing in a greased 1-1/2-qt. baking dish; cover and refrigerate.) Skewer openings and tie drumsticks together. Place on a rack in a roasting pan.

Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 3-1/2 to 4 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 185° for meat and 165° for stuffing, basting occasionally with oil. (Bake reserved stuffing, covered, for 1 hour; uncover and bake 10 minutes more.) When the turkey begins to brown, baste if needed and cover lightly with foil. **Yield:** 12-14 servings (12 cups stuffing).

Braised Beef With Barley

I love the combination of beef and barley, so I've served this dish often for everyday meals and special occasions. —June Formanek, Belle Plaine, Iowa

- **1 boneless chuck roast (2 to 2-1/2 pounds)**
- **1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- **3 garlic cloves, minced**
- **1 can (14-1/2 ounces) beef broth**
- **1 bay leaf**
- **1-1/2 teaspoons salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/2 cup medium pearl barley**
- **1 cup frozen peas**
- **1/3 cup sour cream, optional**

In a Dutch oven over medium heat, brown roast in oil. Remove roast and set aside. Drain, reserving 1 tablespoon of the drippings. Saute onion, mushrooms and garlic in drippings until tender. Return roast to the pan.

Add broth, bay leaf, salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1-1/2 hours. Add barley. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes or until meat and barley are tender. Add peas; cover and simmer for 5-10 minutes or until peas are tender. Discard bay leaf.

Set the roast and barley aside; keep warm. If desired, add sour cream to the pan juices; stir until heated through. Slice roast; serve with barley and gravy. **Yield:** 4-6 servings.

Meat Loaf Wellington

- **1 can (10-1/2 ounces) beef gravy, *divided***
- **1-1/2 cups cubed day-old bread**
- **1/4 cup chopped onion**
- **1 egg**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **2 pounds ground beef**
- **1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls**

In a bowl, combine 1/4 cup gravy, bread cubes, onion, egg and salt. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Press into a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 1 hour or until meat is no longer pink and a meat thermometer reads 160°.

Remove loaf from pan; drain on paper towels. Place on a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Unroll crescent roll dough; seal perforations. Cover the top and sides of meat loaf with dough; trim excess. Bake 10-15 minutes longer or until pastry is golden brown. Heat the remaining gravy; serve with meat loaf. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Stuffed Crown Roast of Pork

- **1 pork loin crown roast (5 to 6 pounds, about 10 ribs)**
- **1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt**

MUSHROOM STUFFING:

- **1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms**
- **1/2 cup diced celery**
- **1/4 cup butter**
- **3 cups day-old bread cubes**
- **1/4 teaspoon salt**
- **1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- **1/3 cup apricot preserves**
- **1 cup whole fresh cranberries, optional**

Place roast, rib ends up, in a shallow roasting pan; sprinkle with seasoned salt. Cover rib ends with foil. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 1-1/2 hours.

Meanwhile, saute mushrooms and celery in butter until tender. Stir in bread cubes, salt and pepper. Spoon into the center of the roast. Brush sides of roast with preserves. Bake 1 hour longer or until a meat thermometer inserted into meat between ribs reads 160°; remove foil.

If desired, thread cranberries on a 20-in. piece of thin string or thread. Transfer roast to a serving platter. Loop the cranberry string in and out of the rib ends. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Chicken Kiev

- **1/4 cup butter, softened**
- **1 tablespoon minced chives**
- **1 garlic clove, minced**
- **6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves**
- **3/4 cup crushed cornflakes**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- **1/2 teaspoon paprika**
- **1/3 cup buttermilk**

In a small bowl, mix butter, chives and garlic. Shape into a 3-in. x 2-in. rectangle. Cover and freeze until firm, about 30 minutes.

Flatten each chicken breast to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut the butter mixture crosswise into six pieces; place one piece in center of each chicken breast. Fold long sides over butter; fold ends up and secure with a toothpick.

Combine the cornflakes, parsley and paprika. Dip the chicken into buttermilk; coat evenly with cornflake mixture. Place chicken, seam side down, in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 425° for 35 minutes or until chicken juices run clear. Remove toothpicks before serving. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Current-Glazed Cornish Hens

- **1 package (6 ounces) long grain and wild rice mix**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- **1/4 cup chopped celery**
- **2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- **1/2 cup chopped pecans, toasted**
- **2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- **1/4 teaspoon dried thyme**
- **1/4 teaspoon dried marjoram**
- **4 Cornish game hens**
- **2 tablespoons butter, softened**

CURRANT SAUCE:

- **1/2 cup currant jelly**
- **2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- **1 tablespoon butter**
- **1 tablespoon cornstarch**
- **1/4 cup cider vinegar**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **3 whole cloves**

Prepare rice according to package directions. In a large skillet, saute onion, mushrooms and celery in oil until tender. Remove from the heat; add rice, pecans, parsley, thyme and marjoram. Stuff hens; rub skin with butter. Place on a rack in a shallow baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, for sauce, heat jelly, lemon juice and butter in a small saucepan until melted. Combine cornstarch, vinegar, salt and cloves until smooth; add to pan. Bring to a boil; boil for 2 minutes. After hens have baked for 30 minutes, baste with sauce and bake 30 minutes longer or until juices run clear. Bake extra stuffing in a greased 1-qt. covered baking dish at 350° for 30 minutes. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Meat Loaf Wellington

- 1 can (10-1/2 ounces) beef gravy, *divided*
- 1-1/2 cups cubed day-old bread
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls

In a bowl, combine 1/4 cup gravy, bread cubes, onion, egg and salt. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Press into a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 1 hour or until meat is no longer pink and a meat thermometer reads 160°.

Remove loaf from pan; drain on paper towels. Place on a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Unroll crescent roll dough; seal perforations. Cover the top and sides of meat loaf with dough; trim excess. Bake 10-15 minutes longer or until pastry is golden brown. Heat the remaining gravy; serve with meat loaf. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Stuffed Crown Roast of Pork

- 1 pork loin crown roast (5 to 6 pounds, about 10 ribs)
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt

MUSHROOM STUFFING:

- 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1/2 cup diced celery
- 1/4 cup butter
- 3 cups day-old bread cubes
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/3 cup apricot preserves
- 1 cup whole fresh cranberries, optional

Place roast, rib ends up, in a shallow roasting pan; sprinkle with seasoned salt. Cover rib ends with foil. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 1-1/2 hours.

Meanwhile, saute mushrooms and celery in butter until tender. Stir in bread cubes, salt and pepper. Spoon into the center of the roast. Brush sides of roast with preserves. Bake 1 hour longer or until a meat thermometer inserted into meat between ribs reads 160°; remove foil.

If desired, thread cranberries on a 20-in. piece of thin string or thread. Transfer roast to a serving platter. Loop the cranberry string in and out of the rib ends. **Yield:** 8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Chicken Kiev

- 1/4 cup butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon minced chives
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves
- 3/4 cup crushed cornflakes
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/3 cup buttermilk

In a small bowl, mix butter, chives and garlic. Shape into a 3-in. x 2-in. rectangle. Cover and freeze until firm, about 30 minutes.

Flatten each chicken breast to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut the butter mixture crosswise into six pieces; place one piece in center of each chicken breast. Fold long sides over butter; fold ends up and secure with a toothpick.

Combine the cornflakes, parsley and paprika. Dip the chicken into buttermilk; coat evenly with cornflake mixture. Place chicken, seam side down, in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 425° for 35 minutes or until chicken juices run clear. Remove toothpicks before serving. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Current-Glazed Cornish Hens

- 1 package (6 ounces) long grain and wild rice mix
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans, toasted
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 4 Cornish game hens
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened

CURRANT SAUCE:

- 1/2 cup currant jelly
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1/4 cup cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 whole cloves

Prepare rice according to package directions. In a large skillet, saute onion, mushrooms and celery in oil until tender. Remove from the heat; add rice, pecans, parsley, thyme and marjoram. Stuff hens; rub skin with butter. Place on a rack in a shallow baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, for sauce, heat jelly, lemon juice and butter in a small saucepan until melted. Combine cornstarch, vinegar, salt and cloves until smooth; add to pan. Bring to a boil; boil for 2 minutes. After hens have baked for 30 minutes, baste with sauce and bake 30 minutes longer or until juices run clear. Bake extra stuffing in a greased 1-qt. covered baking dish at 350° for 30 minutes. **Yield:** 4 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Harvest Roll-Ups

My mother worked as a waitress, and this entree was a favorite of many of her customers. She made it for our family, too, and we all enjoyed it. It's especially good in the cooler fall and winter months.

—Irene Garson
Tinley Park, Illinois

Classic Beef Stew

Here's a good old-fashioned stew with rich beef gravy that lets the flavor of the potatoes and carrots come through. This is the perfect hearty dish for a blustery winter day.

—Alberta McKay
Bartlesville, Oklahoma

Goose with Apple-Prune Stuffing

Does my family like this dish? I guess so—they call it "lip-smackin' goose"! The sweet yet savory flavors of the glaze complements the goose.

—Violet Klause
Onoway, Alberta

Mushroom-Stuffed Tenderloin

Slices of this tender beef are filled with a savory mixture of mushrooms, bacon and bread crumbs. The fancy-looking slices make for a pretty presentation. *—Marie Steeber*
Mishicot, Wisconsin

Goose with Apple-Prune Stuffing

- 1 domestic goose (10 to 12 pounds)
- Salt
- STUFFING:
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 6 cups chopped peeled apples
- 1 package (12 ounces) pitted prunes, cut up
- 1 cup apple juice
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1/3 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon rubbed sage
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon ground thyme
- 1 bay leaf, crumbled
- 3 to 4 cups coarse bread crumbs
- GLAZE (optional):
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/2 cup chili sauce
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

Sprinkle inside of goose with salt. Prick skin well; set aside. In a skillet, saute celery, onion and garlic in butter; transfer to a large bowl. Add the next 10 ingredients. Add bread crumbs until stuffing has the desired consistency. Stuff the goose.

Place with breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 3 to 3-1/2 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 185°. Drain fat from pan as it accumulates.

If desired, combine glaze ingredients in a saucepan. Cook and stir until bubbly; cook and stir 2 minutes more. Brush over goose during last 20 minutes of baking. Remove stuffing. **Yield:** 8-10 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Mushroom-Stuffed Tenderloin

- 3 bacon strips
- 1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3/4 cup dry bread crumbs, *divided*
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1 beef tenderloin (about 2 pounds), trimmed
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese

In a skillet, cook bacon until crisp. Remove bacon; crumble and set aside. Drain, reserving 1 tablespoon drippings. In the drippings, saute the mushrooms, onion and garlic until tender. Remove from the heat; stir in 1/2 cup of bread crumbs, parsley and bacon.

Cut a slit lengthwise three-quarters of the way through the tenderloin. Lightly place stuffing in the pocket and close with toothpicks. Combine butter and Parmesan cheese; spread over top and sides of meat. Press the remaining bread crumbs onto butter mixture. Place meat on a rack in a shallow roasting pan.

Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 15 minutes. Cover and bake for 1 hour or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°). Let stand for 10 minutes and remove toothpicks before slicing. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Harvest Roll-Ups

- 6 bacon strips
- 1 boneless round steak (2 pounds)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can (14 ounces) sauerkraut, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) condensed beef broth, undiluted
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup cold water
- Hot cooked noodles, optional
- Chopped fresh parsley, optional

In a skillet over medium heat, cook bacon until crisp. Remove bacon to paper towel to drain; discard all but 2 tablespoons drippings. Cut the steak into six pieces and pound to 1/4-in. thickness; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place 1/3 to 1/2 cup sauerkraut and a bacon slice on each piece of meat. Roll up; secure with a short skewer or toothpicks. Brown in drippings. Add broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 50-60 minutes or until meat is tender. Remove roll-ups; keep warm.

Combine flour and water to form a smooth paste. Bring cooking liquid to a boil; add flour mixture, stirring constantly. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly. Remove skewers or toothpicks from roll-ups; serve with gravy over noodles if desired. Sprinkle with parsley if desired. **Yield:** 6 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

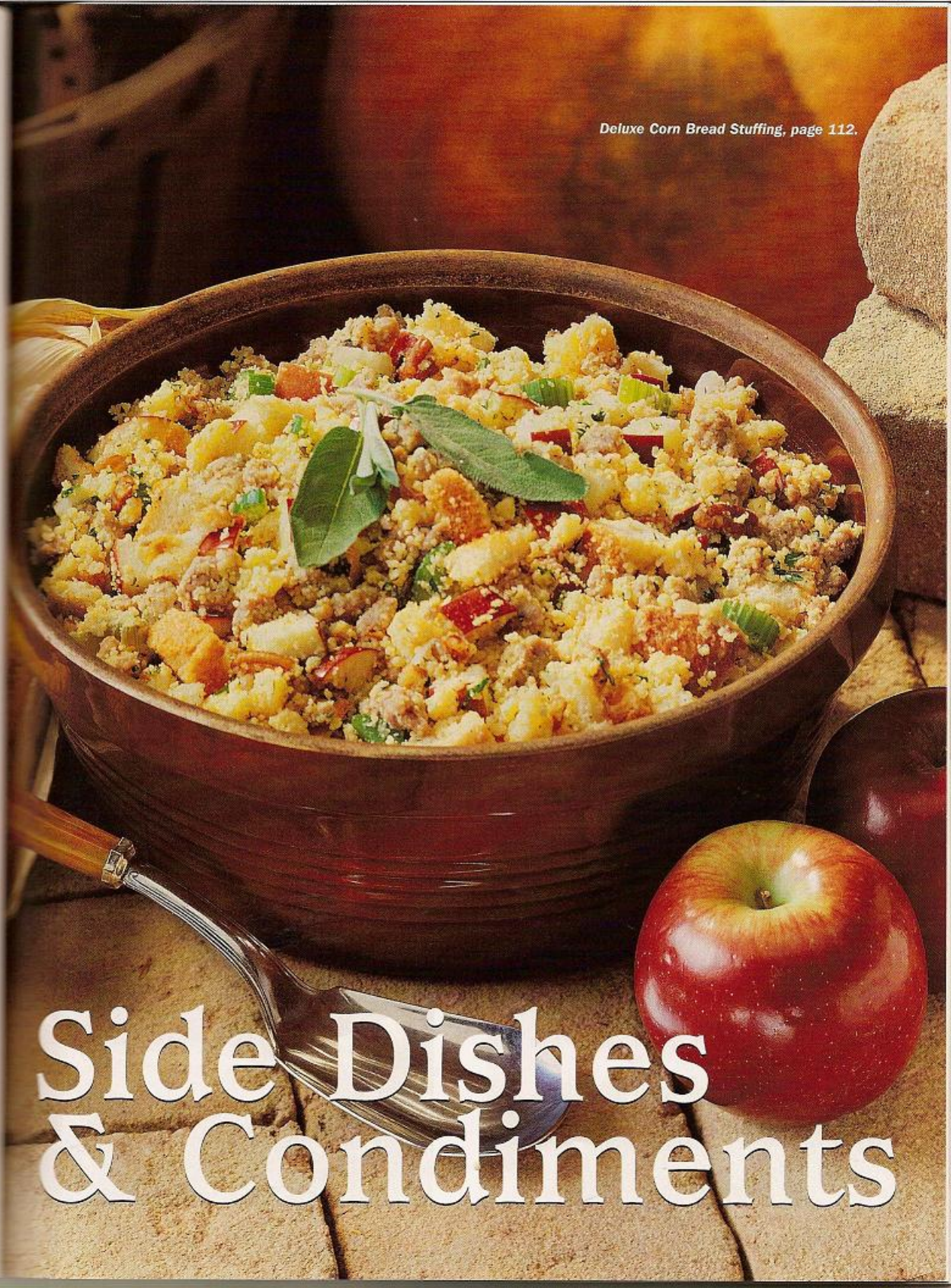
Classic Beef Stew

- 2 pounds beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 to 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1-1/2 cups chopped onion
- 1 can (16 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (10-1/2 ounces) condensed beef broth, undiluted
- 3 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley flakes
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 6 medium carrots, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 cup sliced celery (1-inch pieces)

In a Dutch oven, brown the beef, half at a time, in oil. Drain. Return all meat to pan. Add onion, tomatoes, beef broth, tapioca, garlic, parsley, salt, pepper and bay leaf. Bring to a boil; remove from the heat.

Cover and bake at 350° for 1-1/2 hours. Stir in carrots, potatoes and celery. Bake, covered, 1 hour longer or until meat and vegetables are tender. Remove bay leaf before serving. **Yield:** 6-8 servings.

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004



Deluxe Corn Bread Stuffing, page 112.

Side Dishes & Condiments

Taste of Home's Best Holiday Recipes 2004

Maple Baked Beans

(Pictured above)

Since my husband raises hogs and my parents produce maple syrup, this recipe's a natural for me!
—Cindy Huitema, Dunnville, Ontario

- **1 pound dry navy beans**
- **4 quarts water, *divided***
- **6 slices bacon, cut up *or* 1 cup cubed fully cooked ham**
- **1 medium onion, chopped**
- **1 cup maple syrup**
- **1/2 cup ketchup**
- **1/4 cup barbecue sauce**
- **5 teaspoons cider vinegar**
- **1 teaspoon prepared mustard**
- **1 teaspoon salt**
- **1/2 teaspoon pepper**

Sort and rinse beans; place in a 4-qt. Dutch oven. Cover with 2 qts. cold water. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat. Cover and let stand 1 hour. Drain and rinse beans.

Return beans to Dutch oven; cover with remaining water. Bring to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for 30-40 minutes or until almost tender. Drain and reserve liquid.

In a 2-1/2-qt. casserole or bean pot, combine beans with all remaining ingredients. Cover and bake at 300° for 2-1/2 hours or until tender. Stir occasionally; add reserved bean liquid if necessary. **Yield:** 10-12 servings.

No Beans About It

Dried beans can be stored in an airtight container for up to a year in a cool, dry place. Before preparing them, check dried beans thoroughly for tiny pebbles or other debris.

Pear Cranberry Sauce

(Pictured below)

We don't care for regular cranberry sauce, so I usually perk it up with other fruit. This pear version is the one my family requests most often. It's sweet, tangy and a beautiful ruby-red color. Since it keeps well in the refrigerator, I often make it in advance.
—Joyce Bowman, Lady Lake, Florida

- **2-1/2 cups cubed peeled ripe pears (about 3 medium)**
- **1 cup water**
- **1 to 2 teaspoons minced fresh gingerroot**
- **1 cinnamon stick (3 inches), broken in half**
- **1 package (12 ounces) fresh *or* frozen cranberries**
- **1 to 1-1/4 cups sugar**

In a saucepan, combine the pears, water, ginger and cinnamon. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes. Stir in cranberries and sugar. Return to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10-12 minutes or until the cranberries have popped and sauce is slightly thickened, stirring several times. Discard cinnamon sticks. Mash sauce if desired. Cool. Cover and refrigerate. **Yield:** about 2 cups.